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ABSTRACT

This guide, designed to be used by facilitators of the Building Better Career Futures, a comprehensive career development program for young adults, is to be used in conjunction with the Backgrounder and the Portfolio Builder. It includes an introduction to the full program and lesson plans for all topics. Each lesson plan begins with a cover sheet outlining the topic content; a list of any materials that will be needed; the objectives of the session; and relevant pages for reference in the Backgrounder. The lessons themselves include a detailed outline for delivery, key learning points, and samples of suggested flipcharts/handouts. The lessons are divided into the four parts of the program. The first section is "Understanding Career Development," which discusses current foundations in career development that support action and success. The second section, "Opportunities in the Labour Market," includes strategies related to making sense of the labor market, opportunity awareness, assessing labor market information, and employability skills. "Opportunities for Me" includes activities concerning personal metaphors, values, dependable strengths, mapping, and a career-life project. The final section, "Taking Charge," includes activities about moving to decision-making and career action, whole-brained decision making, and goal tests and contingencies. (Includes a list of 20 resources.) (MKA)

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ED 432 716

Building Better Career Futures

Facilitator Guide

by
Lynne Bezanson
and
Sareena Hopkins

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Building Better Career Futures

Dear Facilitator,

Welcome to **Building Better Career Futures**, a comprehensive career development program for young adults. A 3-day Facilitator Training provides a full orientation to the program and is required to become a certified deliverer. In the enclosed package, you'll find the three key components of this program:

The Facilitator Guide: This is your main resource. It includes an introduction to the full program and lesson plans for all topics. Each lesson begins with a cover sheet outlining:

- the topic content;
- a list of any materials that you'll need to deliver it;
- the objectives of the session; and
- relevant pages for reference in your **Backgrounder**.

The lessons themselves include a detailed outline for delivery, key learning points and "minis" of suggested flipcharts/ handouts.

The Portfolio Builder: This is the main resource for participants. It is their personal record of learning and development for the program. You will want to be familiar with its content and process so that it becomes a tool not only to support individual career development but also to complement the group process. The **Portfolio Builder** mirrors the themes of the group program. It includes an introduction to each theme of the program, all of the handouts used as part of the group process and individual reflective activities.

Each participant should have their own copy of the **Portfolio**. You are free to make photocopies or may order additional copies for $10 each from CCDF (ordering info below). You'll note that the **Portfolio** is shrink wrapped. Ideally, we suggest having participants use binders, so that pages can be added. Participants should be supported to "make it their own", so we encourage using some kind of flexible binding.

The **Portfolio** does assume a basic reading ability for self-instruction. If your participants have literacy barriers, you will want to plan a more active role in facilitating their use of the **Portfolio**.

The Backgrounder: The **Backgrounder** is, as the title suggests, a background resource for you. It is intended to support you in your delivery of the program by providing you with:

- guidelines for implementing the program with groups;
- chapters with additional information on the theories and approaches used;
- articles on the themes of the program; and
- alternative group activities on specific topics.

Each topic cover sheet in the **Facilitator Guide** directs you to the relevant sections in your **Backgrounder**. It is an optional companion as you move through **Building Better Career Futures**.

As you prepare to deliver the program, note that it has been developed with flexibility in mind. It includes approximately 60-80 hours of intervention which may be delivered through a range of schedules. Alternatives for delivery include:

- a couple of hours a day;
- weekly sessions;
- week-end retreats;
- "chunks" (one-week modules).

You may choose from any of the above, or may create your own schedule to meet the specific needs of you and your group. You may choose to implement the full program, or choose strategically those interventions that best fit your needs.

However you choose to implement, we encourage you to pace the learning and to keep the "big picture" developmental career-building process in mind. If you have a limited amount of time with participants, you may wish to begin by assessing the group needs and priorizing activities accordingly.

The program is highly interactive and depends on active participation. It will be critical to build a learning partnership in which participants understand and value the purpose, goals and outcomes of the program. With this in place, the journey is already well underway!

Best wishes from the authors,

Lynne Bezanson Sareena Hopkins Donnalee Bell

Please don't hesitate to contact us if we can be of assistance in your preparation or as you deliver the program. For assistance and/or to order additional copies of any program component, please contact:

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Alfred, D. & O'Reilly, E. (1995). *Making Career Sense of Labour Market Information.* The Canadian Career Development Foundation (a CAMCRY resource).

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We are most grateful to the above authors/publishers who have enabled us to draw on their exemplary research and development.

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BUILDING BETTER CAREER FUTURES

INTRODUCTION

Few decisions have as profound an impact on our lives as the choices made and not made with respect to our careers. Increasingly career development is recognized as integral in the personal growth of youth and in ongoing development over the lifespan.

Youth are challenged to develop appropriate and personally meaningful career plans. Today, we all face multiple transitions and decision points geared to the outcomes of finding a job, return to school, and/or starting a business. *How* we arrive at these outcomes, requires exploration. Career planning is often mistakenly seen as a decision "event". Deciding among these career directions, however, should be a result of learning opportunities woven into career programs and infused into our daily experience. In order to assist participants in evolving meaningful career plans, learning activities in this program include:

- **Understanding Career Development** — current foundations in career development that support action and success;
- **Opportunities in the Labour Market** — strategies to research and make sense of labour market information, resources, trends, educational requirements and training opportunities;
- **Opportunities for Me** — exploration and clarification of interests, abilities, values, beliefs and sources of personal satisfaction as foundations for career direction;
- **Taking Charge** — strategies and skills for decision-making and moving to career action.

Woven throughout as an underlying theme are opportunities to build a repertoire of portable skills for the career journey. Examples include transferable skills, such as self-management, problem-solving, teamwork, initiative and action planning (completing a career plan with back-up options, résumé and application completion, successful interviewing and job search skills).

Another critical theme in the movement toward career maturity is reflection — time to understand, personalize and integrate experience into a greater sense of purpose and personal career direction.

As the words would suggest, career *development* is a process which evolves over a lifetime. There are no "right" or "wrong" career decisions. Rather, the development of our work/life plan is made up of many career choices as we face many inevitable transitions in our working lives. Our career development is not always "upwardly mobile." Rather, it is often cyclical, mirroring our personal ups and downs. Our challenge is to embrace change and uncertainty (there are no guarantees in life or in career) and commit ourselves to lifelong learning to adapt to the ever changing realities of work life.

The purpose of the **Building Better Career Futures** is to provide an opportunity for youth to develop skills and attitudes that will prepare them to be better managers of this process. A legacy of successful implementation will be motivated youth who are better equipped, as a result of their experience, to direct their own career futures.

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TOPIC: INTRODUCTORY SESSION

- Ice Breaker
- Objectives
- Agenda
- Expectations
- Norms

YOU WILL NEED:

Regular 8½ x 11 and flip chart paper

On flip chart or overhead:

- Objectives
- Agenda
- Norms

PURPOSE:

1. To introduce participants to each other and to facilitators.
2. To introduce the career development objectives and agenda of the program.
3. To clarify participant expectations and to respond to questions/concerns.
4. To establish norms for group process.

BACKGROUNDER: ADDITIONAL FACILITATOR RESOURCES

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1. Ice Breaker

Note : Any number of introductory exercises are possible. The important thing is to provide an opportunity for the group to interact, develop comfort and begin to function as a group.

The purpose of an ice breaker is to allow participants to become acquainted in a relatively non-threatening way. There are many alternative exercises for this function. The following outlines one option. Several others are included in your Backgrounder. This exercise has two parts:

- a "Who Am I?" exercise; and
- an exercise to share course expectations.

Provide each participant with a blank 8½ x 11 inch sheet of paper. Ask them to write "Who Am I?" on the top of the sheet.

Give approximately 10 minutes for each participant to write five answers to the question. Request that at least one answer be related to their career. When they finish, give the following instructions:

- You are asked to find someone in the room whom you do not know extremely well. It can be someone you know a little or someone you don't know at all.
- Exchange your "Who Am I?" list with that other person, taking time to read each other's answers.
- Spend approximately five minutes getting acquainted with the other participant. Use each other's answers as a basis for finding out more about each other.
- At the conclusion of your conversations, you will be asked to introduce each other to the group.

Introductions

Reconvene the whole group. Have each person introduce their partner in the exercise. (Allow each person approximately five minutes.) As facilitators, it is important that you participate in this exercise as well.

For the co-operative, open climate you want to create, it is important that you make yourself knowable as well as asking participants to be knowable.

Thank the group for their willingness to become involved immediately and for sharing a little of themselves with their partners and with the group.

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OBJECTIVES

To provide participants with tools, activities and resources to ensure that they leave the program with

- motivation and hope
- knowledge of alternatives in the labour market
- pride
- career direction and a plan to get there.

2. Objectives

It is important to be clear about what you hope to achieve in completing this career development curriculum. Take time to articulate your objectives. (Note: Objectives for each session are outlined on the section cover sheet and we have included a sample flip chart. These provide a model for your consideration.) Once you have defined your career development objectives as clearly as possible, review them with the group so that the participants have a sense of the proposed goals, purpose and expected outcomes. Encourage discussion and input to ensure that the objectives are understood and owned by the group.

3. Agenda

Review the overall agenda for the program — post an outline on the wall. This overview gives participants a clear idea of the program direction and expectations for their learning involvement. Provide them with time to read the agenda. Invite comments or suggested changes. Tell them the agenda is intended to maximize their learning and to be as responsive as possible to their needs, so any time during the session, suggestions or shifts are welcome.

4. Review of Program Expectations

It is important that time be set aside to discuss frankly and openly expectations for learning from this program.

Options for this include:

- Open a large group discussion — recording all expectations on the flip chart and indicating willingness to accommodate as reasonable, but also being clear if any expectations are beyond achieving.
- Ask participants to complete the sentence: *"For me, this program will have been successful if I leave with...."* Invite participants to discuss the responses in pairs, followed by a large group take-up.
- Paired or small group activity — partners/groups share expectations and report to large group. You may then follow a variation or the same procedure as above to discuss expectations as a large group.

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NORMS

Guidelines for how the group agrees to behave so that:

- group learning goals are achieved, and
- individual learning needs are met to the greatest extent possible.

↗ **Implicit**

NORMS

↘ **Explicit**

- Responsibilities
- Behaviours
- Problem-Solving and Decision-Making
- Conflict Resolution

- Provide five minutes for participants to write their personal expectations for learning over the period of the program anywhere on their "Who Am I" list. Invite them to join a new partner to do the following:
  - Exchange lists. They may wish to make a comment about something from the "Who Am I?" list or the introduction which they found interesting or surprising.
  - Compare expectations and jointly consolidate them onto flip chart paper.

  Provide about 10 minutes for this exercise and, when it's finished, tape the flip chart sheets on the wall so they can be revisited. You may then use the flip chart sheets to guide a large group discussion.

5. Group Norms

With the group, review the definition of norms. All groups need and benefit from a basic set of rules/guidelines to promote constructive interaction to ensure that group goals are accomplished and each group member's individual learning is maximized. With the help of the group establish six to ten norms that the group agrees are important and post them in a visible location in the room. Inform the group that you'll be revisiting norms periodically throughout the program.

As you work with the group on norms over the course of the program, you'll want to note the difference between implicit norms (ones that the group naturally establishes without having to articulate them) and explicit norms (ones that have been clearly articulated). Typically, implicit norms emerge as a result of facilitator modeling. Sometimes, however, they may also be shaped by the dominant behaviours of a minority. Both are powerful influencers of group process. Setting norms explicitly ensures that group norms actually reflect the preferences and priorities of the group.

Also note that norms may be negotiated or imposed. Sometimes, a group's characteristics and goals imply certain non-negotiable norms (ex. no violence, confidentiality).

Norms address four key issues in the group:

1. Responsibilities;
2. Behaviours;
3. Problem solving/decision making;
4. Conflict resolution.

Norms should be negotiated when a group first forms, revisited regularly, and amended as necessary. Typically, initial norm-setting focusses primarily on responsibility and behaviours. As groups develop, however, they often face problems and conflicts which require new norms. Addressing this proactively, prior to conflict, can serve to support the group in managing its development and growth.

TOPIC: UNDERSTANDING CAREER DEVELOPMENT

- High Five Message
- What is Career Development?
- Career Development Outcomes
- The Changing Workplace - Then & Now

YOU WILL NEED:

On flip chart or overhead:

- High Five Messages
- High Five Questions
- Career Development Definition
- Career Development Outcomes
- The Traditional Pyramid and the Emerging Diamond

PURPOSE:

1. To understand career development in today's context.
2. To connect the importance and relevance of the High Five Career Development messages to the changing labour market.
3. To introduce the Career Development Model.
4. To establish the critical role of accurate labour market information in career development.

BACKGROUNDER: ADDITIONAL FACILITATOR RESOURCES

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THE HIGH 5
CAREER DEVELOPMENT MESSAGES

▲ Change is Constant

❤ Follow your Heart

☼ Focus on the Journey

? Stay Learning

⌂ Be an Ally Access Your Allies

✱ Believe in Yourself

1. The "High Five" Career Development Messages

From: *Engage*

How we manage the world of work is fundamentally influenced by our beliefs and the messages we carry around in our heads.

The following are six messages that form the basis of a program called Engage. The purpose of the program, as the title suggests, is to motivate young people to become "engaged" and to take control of their own career development. The messages are what many youth, parents and career helpers have come to believe is true about career development today. Originally, there were five messages (hence, the "High Five"). When a sixth message was added, the title remained since the "High Six" doesn't quite work!

Show High Five Messages on flip chart or overhead

Take time for discussion with each career development message.

Use the following points to guide discussion as you walk through each message:

Change is Constant

We are constantly changing. Our world is constantly changing. Say goodbye to the old idea that you must pick an occupation and stick to it. Many of the jobs of the 21st century haven't been invented yet. Adaptability could soon be the most important skill to have, both inside the workplace and out.

Follow Your Heart

Find out what you want. Go after what is really important to you. Let your dreams shape your goals. Use the energy your dreams give you to help you learn the skills and take the risks you need to take to make those dreams — or any part of them — a reality.

Focus on the Journey

Life is not a destination. Getting there is actually much more than half the fun — which is perfect, because as you evolve and life evolves around you, the place you thought you were heading may not look so enticing any more. Or, you may have decided you'd rather go off in another direction. Or to somewhere else that hasn't even shown up on your map yet.

Keep Learning

You don't stop growing just because you haven't got any taller. You don't stop learning after you finish school. There are opportunities for learning and growth all around you. Inner space is the final frontier.

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HIGH 5 MESSAGE	
1. What does this really mean to you?	3. What skills/ attitudes will help?
2. What are the risks/challenges of this message?	4. How might you act on this message in your life?

Access Your Allies

There are people out there in your family, your school, your community whom you respect and trust. They can't dance the dance for you, but they will help you figure out how to do it for yourself.

[The above is an excerpt from the Engage magazine *Your Life*.]

A sixth message was added to the Engage program, based on field work with youth, parents and teachers.

Believe in Yourself

Finally, always believe in yourself. Believe that what's deep down inside is something really worthwhile, in both good times and bad. Trust in your abilities to make it and know that inside you're O.K. no matter what happens.

2. **Group Exercise: Personalizing the High Five**
(60 minutes)
Adapted from: *Engage Workshop Leaders' Guide*

This exercise reinforces the "High Five" messages by encouraging participants to relate the messages to their personal issues and to determine concrete strategies for bringing the messages to life.

In plenary, invite participants to answer the following questions for one message:

Focus on the Journey

1. What does this really mean to you?
2. What are the risks/challenges of focussing on the journey?
3. What skills/attitudes will help you to focus on the journey?

Encourage participants to contribute a range of responses to each question.

Have participants, as a large group, brainstorm ways to realize the message "Focus on the Journey." (We suggest doing this as a large group because it is the most difficult message to contextualize.) Participants may say: we could learn more about ourselves to determine our interests, values and beliefs; we could think about how new habits now will help in the future; we can look at our options now to see if there are better ways to do things, etc.

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CAREER DEVELOPMENT

The lifelong process of managing your learning and work.

Job • Occupation • Career • Vocation

Break the participants into five groups. Assign one High Five message to each group. Provide them with a flip chart sheet (one for each group) with the following questions:

1. What does this really mean to you?
2. What are the risks/challenges of this message?
3. What skills/attitude will help?
4. How might you act on this message in your life?

Have the participants answer the 3 questions and brainstorm actions they can take to implement their message. After 30 minutes in small group, have each group present their ideas to the larger group.

Conclude the exercise by summarizing for participants the importance of personalizing the High Five messages and their application to the career journey.

3. Career Development Definition and Outcomes

This program is built upon the premise that career development is a "building" process. We define career development as the lifelong process of managing your learning and work. This implies both the developmental nature of our careers and the inclusion of formal/informal learning and paid/unpaid work. Discuss this definition with your participants. Explore with them how they see career development and how they feel about this definition. Make any connections to the High Five Messages. We have extended this definition into Career Development Outcomes -- a framework for clarifying the intended results of this program. Use the following notes to present the Career Development Outcomes:

There is no single "correct" model of career development. The framework of outcomes presented here was chosen for several reasons.

- It stresses the *process* of career development — it continues over our lifetime.
- It gives *equal emphasis* to knowing your inner world and the outer world in which your career resides.
- It concentrates on acquiring actual skills and competencies to be effective personal career managers.

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CAREER DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES

- Capacity to vision yourself in the future in a positive way.
- Ability to see alternatives in the labour market.
- Knowledge of skills and a sense of purpose and direction.
- A plan to start and a sense of personal agency.

These outcomes serve as a guide or measuring stick to assess the development process of individuals. The framework defines the four key outcomes of the career development process (and, more specifically, of this program):

Dream

1. **The capacity to vision yourself in the future in a positive way.** We need to be able to see that there is a place for us in their future. If we cannot imagine ourselves as successful contributors to the labour market, why would we invest our energy in our career development? We need to be connected to our future in order to see the relevance of career development to ourselves. Therefore, the first critical outcome of this program is to build this vision.

See

2. **The ability to see alternatives in the labour market.** We need to see that we have options and alternatives in the world of work. Seeing opportunities is critical to motivation and hope. This program endeavours to provide opportunities for participants to explore a range of options and expand horizons.

Be

3. **The knowledge of skills and a sense of purpose and direction.** When we have the opportunity to practice our skills, to reflect on our learning, and to receive feedback/ coaching, we begin to develop a repertoire of critical employability skills. Our portable skills become, in a sense, tools in our personal tool kit to be carried forward with pride in our future journies. Therefore, this program weaves opportunities for skill development throughout.

Do

4. **A plan to start and a sense of personal agency.** A key outcome of this program is that participants emerge having made a decision (for now) that builds on the exploration of the labour market and of self and is congruent with their personal sense of mission. A solid plan articulates concrete action steps and has contingencies in place. A plan which ignores the previous 3 building blocks is essentially hollow. A plan that derives from them engenders an attitude for achievement and a sense of personal agency.

The goal of this program is to provide participants with tools, activities and resources to achieve the above career development outcomes.

4. The Changing Workplace: Then & Now

The labour market is changing very quickly. It is described often as a moving target. While this moving target presents a challenge and can be frightening in its unpredictability, it also presents opportunity.

How people manage their career transitions will be influenced by how they view the changes and their place in the new world of work.

Before we get into the nuts and bolts of helping participants with their career plans, it is important to get clear what they believe, broadly speaking, about today's labour market and its implication on their work lives and careers. You will be presenting lots of ideas and concepts about career development. Do they agree with them? What parts "fit" and what parts don't?

From life experience, we know that our beliefs shape our decisions and our actions. What you believe will affect how you intervene as a career helper. Being clear about the way you see the world, and being honest and up front about this with your participants is critical. What your participants believe will shape their career decisions and their journeys.

Discuss Myths

Introduce some old concepts which many still cling to and which get in the way of being in step with changes in the world of work. Brainstorm with the group examples of "career myths". The following are a few examples to draw on:

- Career Choice = Long-term commitment to one employer
  "Once I choose, I choose for life." This can be terrifying and is usually untrue.
- Career Choice = Total personal fulfilment
  "My choice must meet all my needs. My work is my main source of meaning and satisfaction." A limited and doomed-to-disappointment view.
- "Correct" Career Choice = Guaranteed future
  "If I do it right once, I need never have to choose again."
- One Career for Life
  Most can expect to change career directions many times over the lifespan. Staying with one organization for life is increasingly rare.

- Career = A linear process, usually upward
  Flat organizations are increasingly the norm. While employees used to expect to "climb the corporate ladder", most now are challenged to find alternatives for professional development.

Discuss Realities

Contrast current labour market realities with the above myths and those that the group has brainstormed.

You may wish to draw on the following to add to your discussion:

We are bombarded daily with "bad news headlines", the forecasts of labour market analysts, and the predictions of popular writers. It can be confusing and overwhelming as hope seems rare and "gurus" regularly contradict each other. The following are a sampling of recent reported labour market trends. You may wish to add others from current media sources:

- The concept of a single occupation for life is no longer the norm.
- Most analysts predict that people will go through six to 10 occupational changes during their lifetime:
  - people will change jobs every three years; and
  - people will change occupations every five years.
- The jobs are also changing:
  - increase in part-time, part-year jobs;
  - increase in portfolio workers;
  - expansion of service jobs; and
  - high demand for customer service.
- By the beginning of the 21st century, 50 percent of the jobs will require some post-secondary education. But:
  - one quarter as many unskilled jobs will exist;
  - computer literacy will be a basic skill for truckers; and
  - 30 percent of youth drop out of high school.
- Companies will continue to downsize:
  - more emphasis on flexibility; and
  - higher expectations for workers.

- Globalization is accompanied by a shifting paradigm:
  - North American Free Trade Agreement;
  - major trading blocks in Europe and Pacific Rim;
  - increase in technology; and
  - move from resource-based economy to services.

It is important to be in-step with the changing labour market and to keep a perspective on the contradictory headlines while anticipating how current trends might impact the nature of work:

The following are some examples of major shifts:

- Currently, 3% of the Canadian Workforce are miners and farmers compared to 98% 200 years ago.

- The definition of work has changed - in the 1930's work was physical — computers didn't exist then.

- New types of work are being introduced to us:
  - multi-tracking - holding more than one job;
  - job sharing;
  - teleworking - work from home.

Lecturette and Group Activity

Adapted from: *Feller, R. (1996). "Redefining 'Career' During the Work Revolution" in* *__Career Transitions In Turbulent Times,__* *Greensboro, NC: ERIC/CASS Publications, and is based on Charland, W.A. (1993).* *__Career Shifting: Starting Over in a Changing Economy__*. *Holbrook, MA: Adams.*

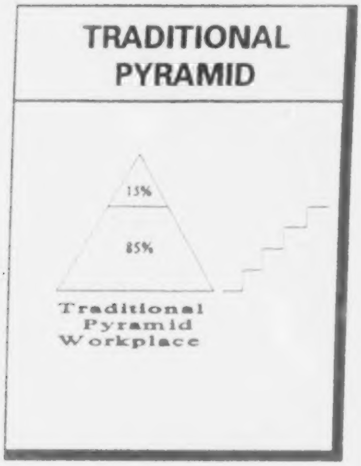
There are many different theories and models to explain the current state of the labour market and to predict the future. One model that we have found useful is that of Canadian, Bill Charland. He suggests that we are in the midst of a fundamental shift in the nature of the workplace. He uses visual images to illustrate the transition from a traditional "pyramid" labour market to our emerging "diamond" workplace.

Present Charland's Model of the Changing Workplace:

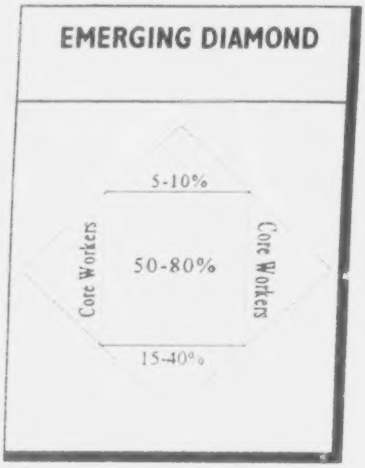
You may wish to use 2 flip charts, drawing one figure on each. This enables you to graphically illustrate characteristics of each and demonstrate our current position of transition between the two models. Draw the content to describe the traditional pyramid and the emerging diamond workplaces from the group as much as possible. Under the pyramid, you may ask the following questions to elicit group contributions:

- What words described the "pyramid" workplace?
- What did employers value?
- How was success defined?
- Where were blue collar workers? White collar workers?

13a


TRADITIONAL PYRAMID

15%
85%
Traditional Pyramid Workplace

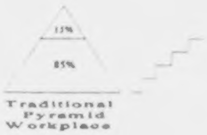

EMERGING DIAMOND

5-10%
Core Workers
50-80%
Core Workers
15-40%

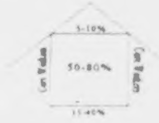
- How did workers "get in"? How did they "move ahead"?
- Where were the challenges? Where were the opportunities?

You may then ask the same questions for the emerging diamond. Supplement group input by drawing on the following text:

Traditional Pyramid



Emerging Diamond



Characteristics of Pyramid and Diamond

• Thick at the bottom; narrow at the top • Intelligence and talent at the top • Pay your dues and you'll rise • Loyalty pays off • Skill requirements are clear • Lots of chances to enter at the bottom; lots of chances to stay there too • Hierarchical -- Specialists abound • Decision-making at the top and in the hands of very few • Considerable differentiation between "blue collar" labourers and "white collar" professionals. • Focus is on Occupations/Job Titles	• Thick in the middle; thin at the bottom and top • Fewer at the top, but big money • Rising has been replaced by moving laterally through learning • Big square is knowledge and service-based. Huge opportunity for self-starters and risk-takers • Constricted base means very limited opportunity for low skill/inexperienced -- Assumption of basic skills. • Fast paced and dynamic -- Generalists who are transferable/mobile will succeed in the highly competitive square. • Decision-making in teams • Crumbling differentiation - "aqua collar" workers are emerging as tasks expand and distinctions blur • Focus is on SKILLS - Charland suggests that if we focus on learning and building skills, the occupations will take care of themselves.

Note that much of our dominant culture and media continues to suggest that "up remains the way to go". "Climbing the corporate ladder" and "living to work" may, however, be messages whose times -- at least for now -- has passed.

We are in the midst of transition. In some communities, the pyramid remains, but generally, the diamond is emerging.

Reflection

Encourage participants to reflect on the labour market that they see around them. Do they see this shift in their own community? How would they characterize their current labour market?

Conclusion

Draw the conclusion that generally speaking, the number of workers who could remain employed with minimal employability skills has diminished dramatically in Canada. Charland would suggest that the diamond can be a labour market of both challenge and opportunity. He urges young job seekers to connect with learning organizations -- Take any position in a firm that invests in the development of its employees. He also suggests that skills are central to success in the diamond. He urges us to focus on SKILLS, and let occupations take care of themselves.

This section has focused on understanding career development in today's labour market. It has endeavoured to challenge old concepts which may no longer be true and which may hinder our growth in today's workplace and to articulate new messages for success.

In the next section, we'll be looking at where trends and labour market changes might lead in terms of opportunity.

TOPIC: MAKING SENSE OF THE LABOUR MARKET

- What is the Labour Market?
- Structure of the Labour Market
- New Analysis Exercise
- 10 Things You Love to Do/For Love or Money

YOU WILL NEED:

Current newspaper articles relevant to the world of work.
(Collect in advance 1-2 article(s) for each group of 3 participants.)
On flip chart or overhead:

- Structure of the Labour Market
- The 3 P's of Labour Market Information
- Questions: News Analysis Exercise

PURPOSE:

1. To illustrate the importance of the labour market (exploration outward) in career building.
2. To present the structure of the labour market, identifying critical factors influencing labour market change.
3. To make the connection between labour market theory and practice.

BACKGROUNDER: ADDITIONAL FACILITATOR RESOURCES

• Information - A Foundation for Successful Career Development	Page 57
• Making Sense of Labour Market Information - Background for News Analysis, *(Everyday Career Development)*	Page 58
• Additional Exercises: Trend Feud, What's Hot? *(Heart Beats)*	Page 63

1. Introduction

Introduce importance of finding out about the labour market in building a personal career plan.

Draw from the following text to introduce the labour market:

> Deciding on a job or career focus is an important decision. The world of work is changing and we need to be tuned in now more so than ever. Yet, many people spend more time researching the purchase of a refrigerator or car than they do getting information about careers and the projected future for those careers. People often make career decisions based on a newspaper headline touting a fast-growing career field, what they see in movies or on television, what their families think they should do, or by taking the first job that comes along. One major complaint from job search or placement personnel is that their clients do not obtain realistic information on which to base job, education or career choices.

Why do you think this is? Many people see the labour market as mysterious, assuming that you need a degree in economics to understand it. They don't see the labour market as their own -- Rather, it is "out there", separate from their career development. As a result, many strategies and sources of labour market information are PASSIVE -- pre-packaged information for general consumption. There are several potential limitations to such information:

- It may not be tailored to the unique conditions of a specific region or population.
- It is often outdated by the time we receive it.
- It may lack the context that enables us to make information personally meaningful.

Our intent is to present ACTIVE approaches to accessing relevant labour market information, to analyze it critically, and to integrate it into personal career plans.

2. What is the Labour Market?

The first step in using labour market information successfully is understanding the structure of the labour market and the factors that influence labour market change. In simple terms, the labour market is an arena where demand for labour and supply of labour meet.

You may wish to create a visual image, by exploring the workings of a city market. Invite participants to imagine the many different stalls in a typical market -- fresh flowers, fruit and vegetables, art, hand-made crafts -- an array of colours, sights, sounds and smells. Then have them imagine that they were considering adding their own stall to this bustling market. Brainstorm with the group: "What would you need to know?" Typical responses might include:

- How much does it cost to rent a stall?
- What city by-laws would apply?
- What is the competition doing?
- What is the market value of your wares?
- Who shops? When?

You, and each of your participants are members of the labour force. The labour market is yours -- your career development is affected by it and you contribute to it. Therefore, in the same way as we'd need to research the city market, if we're going to function effectively in today's labour market, we need to know what impacts it, its current conditions and how it works.

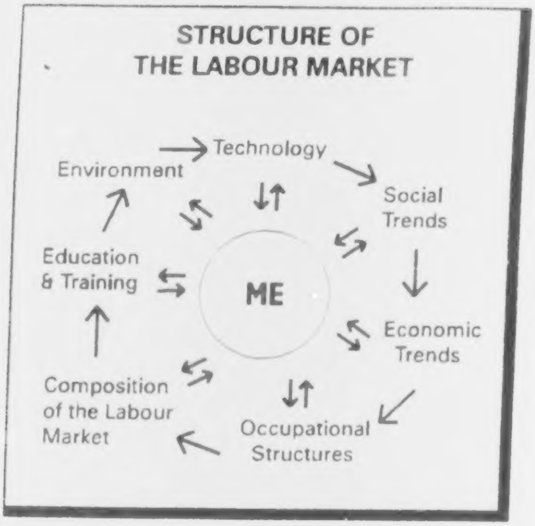
Brainstorm with the group: "If you think of the current conditions of the labour market, what are some of the trends/influencers that young job-seekers should know?" Record the brainstormed list on flip chart.

Typical responses might include:

- global economy;
- technology;
- aging baby boomers;
- unemployment/employment rates;
- trade agreements;
- flattening organizations, downsizing in some sectors, growth in other sectors;
- holistic medicine;
- entrepreneurship;
- prior learning assessment;
- apprenticeship programs.

Draw on your brainstormed list for examples as you present the following six components that influence the labour market.

18a


STRUCTURE OF THE LABOUR MARKET

Technology
Social Trends
Economic Trends
Occupational Structures
Composition of the Labour Market
Education & Training
Environment
ME

3. Structure of the Labour Market

Show flip chart/ overhead

The following seven components influence the current conditions of the labour market:

- social trends;
- economic trends;
- occupational structure;
- composition of the labour force;
- education and training;
- technology; and
- the environment.

Highlight each component

Adapted from: *Making Career Sense of Labour Market Information*

Leaving the flip chart/overhead up and referring back to it, use the following points to guide your presentation. Encourage participants to offer additional examples of each component.

Social trends

A social trend is based on increased public awareness, usually via mass media, and a change in opinions and values. This can influence the demand for specific standards and qualities in goods and services. The labour market will then respond by demanding standards be met to provide what the buyers want.

For example, the increased emphasis on quality of life has led to a preference by couples for using birthing centres staffed by midwives, allowing for natural childbirth and the involvement of the father. As a result, demands now exist for certified midwives, new facilities, different equipment and educational material, which in turn increases pressure for legislation and licensing.

Economic trends

The economy, or an economic trend, might influence the amount of technological development in an industry and, thus, its ability to compete for sales or for qualified employees. For example, a trade agreement such as NAFTA both expands the markets for Canadian exports and allows the import of cheaper or perhaps more technologically advanced products. This can affect such things as prices, wages and unemployment rates, and can cause the relocation of industries. So you can see how the supply and demand of workers and jobs in the labour market is constantly affected by social and economic trends.

Occupational structures

There has always been a natural division of labour in society based on which jobs have the highest status, which have the highest or lowest pay, which require extensive training and which are similar enough to be grouped together. A formal occupational classification system, the CCDO (Canadian Classification and Dictionary of Occupations), was developed in 1971 and the new NOC (National Occupational Classification) replaced it in 1993.

Such classification systems allow the collection of occupational data through the census, the labour force survey and other data. These data can then be used to make occupational projections, identify training needs and perform occupational research. They can help workers identify career paths by learning about occupational mobility and skill levels. For example, a worker can figure out what type of occupation would match his or her skills and what additional upgrading or new skills training would be necessary.

Composition of the labour force

Demographics are a key factor in shaping Canada's economic life. What factors do you think can be directly related to the supply of workers? (e.g., birth rate, age composition of the population, work force participation rates and rates of immigration). For example, Canada's birth rate is below replacement level and the population is aging. There is some question as to whether the working age population can maintain the existing levels of social services in the decades ahead. We have all heard about the concerns about pension plans and social services for a greying population.

Education and training

For companies to keep pace with the rapidly changing economy, business and industry agree that it is vitally important for education and training programs to provide workers with the necessary knowledge, skills, attitudes and values.

Students these days need to know that, although a good education can prepare them for employment, lifelong learning is an important part of any career.

The need for skilled workers puts a demand on educational institutions but there is usually a time lag of three to four years between the increase in the demand and the ability of a training program to meet this demand. Recessionary times could be a natural time for training while employees are not so pushed to produce; however, this would involve long-range upgrading and training strategies and budgets. Young job seekers need to consider what strategies to use when they know that schools are behind in training for their field of interest.

Technology

We are all aware of how technology has changed over the years. What changes come to mind? (e.g., automatic banking machines, fax machines, robotics, e-mail etc.) Changing technology can be included in any discussion of the other five components of the labour market we have already reviewed. The way we use technology to work from our homes and to connect with the rest of the world, for example, links with social trends and economic trends such as organizational restructuring and global competition. Technology also has had an important impact on occupational structures because it has caused the loss of certain jobs as well as the emergence of new occupations. Education and training are, of course, involved as new skills and upgrading present skills are required to keep up with technology.

Environment

Finally, we are increasingly aware of the impact of the impact of the environment on the labour market. Shifts in climate and our management of natural resources affect the supply and demand of products and services across many sectors. In Canada, significant shifts in the logging and fishing industries can be linked to the effect of the environment.

4. **News Analysis Exercise**
(60 minutes)
Adapted from: *Everyday Career Development*

This exercise provides an opportunity to integrate participants' understanding of the structure of the labour market by applying it to real events in the news today. It will assist learners to see the many points of access to labour market information. Introduce the exercise using the following as a guide:

Introduction

As you've seen, many factors influence flux within the labour market. Sectors in your community will rise and fall in dominance, new sectors may emerge and new roles will appear as others fade away. Fortunately, these changes do not occur so rapidly that you need to revise your analyses every day or every week. Most of these changes can be predicted or observed simply by maintaining awareness of labour market issues as you keep up with other changes in your community and in the world.

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THE 3 P's OF LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION

- Print
  - Hard
  - Soft
  - Other Media
- People
  - Information Interviews
- Participate
  - Job Shadow
  - Volunteer
  - Work Experience
  - Paid Employment

In plenary, brainstorm source of labour market information. Note that participants were able to generate a list of trends/influencers that young job-seekers should know. Where did their knowledge come from? What sources of labour information do they already use?

Sources of Labour Market Information

Typical responses might include:

- newspaper, magazine;
- Internet;
- TV, radio;
- friends, family;
- Chamber of Commerce;
- Career Centres;
- Information interviewing, networking;
- volunteering.

Note that sources of labour market information may be grouped into the following 3 categories:

The 3 P's

The 3 P's

Print - including both hard (ex: newspaper) and soft (ex: Internet)
People - including networking, information interviewing
Participate - including job shadowing, volunteering, work experience.

This activity "zooms in" on a print source (newspapers and/or magazines) to extrapolate current and relevant information.

You will need:
- copies of current newspaper/ magazine articles relevant to the world of work and flip chart sheets with *News Analysis* questions for each group

To structure the News Analysis Exercise, create groups of approximately 3-5 participants from the same geographic region, who will work together to analyze a newspaper/ magazine article. Have each group choose an article from those that you brought in from the morning's newspaper (or the day before, if you're a late riser) or from current magazines.

Exercise - News Analysis: Have each group analyze the article by answering the following questions:

NEWS ANALYSIS EXERCISE

1. What does this article tell you about the labour market? What trends can you identify as a result of this article?

    - International trends?
    - National trends?
    - Provincial trends?
    - Local trends?

2. What products/services can you imagine might be needed (in demand) as a result? What opportunities can you identify?

NEWS ANALYSIS EXERCISE

1. What does this article tell you about the labour market? What trends can you identify as a result of the article? Can you identify any international trends?
national trends?
provincial trends?
local trends?

2. What products/services can you imagine might be needed as a result of these trends? What opportunities can you identify?

* *Adapted from: Everyday Career Development (Redekopp, 1994)*

Review the questions on flip chart with the full group. Provide approximately 30 minutes (minimum) for work in small groups and walk around to help each group. Ask that groups be prepared to provide a brief report back to plenary.

Debrief

Take 15 minutes to have volunteers share their analyses and lead a large group discussion about the issues and difficulties of analyzing the labour market. Emphasize that this process is an attempt to promote an active and analytical approach to labour market information.

Emphasize the importance of asking questions

Make the point that it actually takes very little time to ask and answer the basic questions to elicit labour market information. In a sense, you do it every time you talk with someone, listen to someone, watch something or read something. The key is remembering to ask yourself the questions, and this requires constant vigilance.

Note that one thing participants may have noticed about the activity is that the issue of "correctness" did not arise. This exercise is more abcut seeing possibilities and potentials than it is about discovering the absolute truth.

In our view, it is not your job as facilitator to provide perfectly accurate labour market information to participants. Rather, your job is to help them envision a range of potential work options and to "be snoopy" (ie. to learn to critically analyze information and to make connections between information and their own career development).

"The future ain't what it used to be"

Let your participants know that predictions (even those of writers in the field) are tentative guesses. As Yogi Berra put it, "The future ain't what it used to be," meaning that predictions about the future are often incorrect. By analyzing a range of information, however, sometimes we can "sniff the future". This helps us to broaden horizons, remain open to opportunity and, therefore, maintain a competitive edge.

Reflect as a group on the skills used in this activity. Skills include:

- lateral thinking
- literacy
- communication
- creativity/imagination

Make the link between these skills and employability skills.

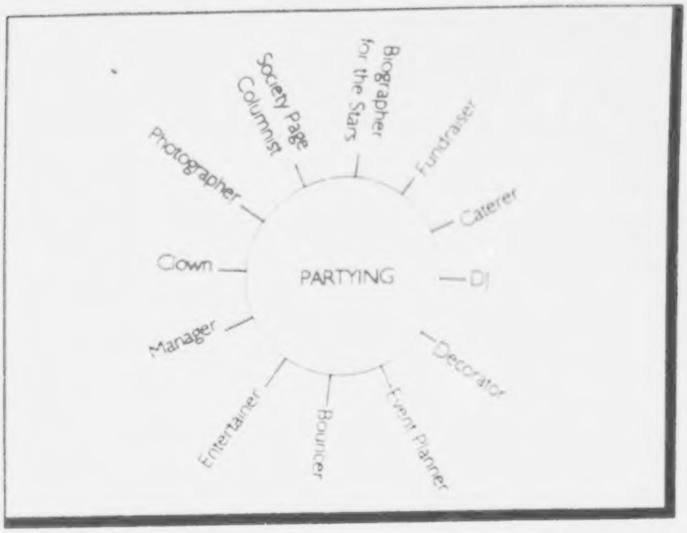
5. **Energizer:** 10 Things You Love To Do For Love Or Money (25 minutes) Adapted from: *Engage*

A frequent difficulty or self-imposed limitation individuals place on their possible career futures is ignoring the maxim "Follow Your Heart." Individuals often do not imagine their wished-for futures. This restricts our view of what is possible. This exercise (from Engage) asks participants to brainstorm how to turn the things they love to do into revenue-generating activities. The activity will not create the wished-for future — but may expand the vista of what is possible and help to break us out of restrictive thinking.

- Ask participants to list 10 things they *love* to do. (They need not be only work-related.) Note that participants will not be required to share their responses -- so they need not feel restricted in making their list!

- Ask for a volunteer who *is* willing to share one of her/his items. Work with whatever interest you receive, however frivolous it may seem initially. Good ideas will emerge.

24a


PARTYING
Biographer for the Stars
Fundraiser
Caterer
DJ
Decorator
Event Planner
Bouncer
Entertainer
Manager
Clown
Photographer
Society Page Columnist

- Conduct a brainstorming session, eliciting all the possible ways a person could build on this interest or love and make money. Encourage as much diversity as possible.

- Record on flip chart the several revenue-generating possibilities which emerge. How many are potential occupations?

- Give the completed flip chart to the volunteer as a reminder of the multitude of potential work options for them.

Note: Typically, whatever the "love", it is possible to generate many possibilities. While some may be outrageous, others may represent a potential avenue to pursue. The activity is intended to expand horizons and acknowledge that the things we love can be powerful motivators for action.

Alternative Exercise:

Ask a volunteer who has set a personal career goal to share that goal. Write "goal" in centre of the flip chart. Ask the volunteer to identify what it is about this career goal that he or she loves, or imagines he or she will love, doing. Record responses on flipchart.

Invite the group to brainstorm other occupational avenues which might fulfill similar values or interests.

Debrief

Conclude the exercise by pointing out:

- While we may not fulfill all of our "heart's desires' through paid work, it is important to consider the extent to which our work can be congruent with our values and interests; and

- Today, more than ever, it is important to think creatively about options and to explore a variety of work opportunities.

TOPIC: OPPORTUNITY AWARENESS

- Times They Are a Changin'
- The Structure of Opportunity
- Fads, Trends and Megatrends
- The Tree

YOU WILL NEED:

Times They Are a Changin' Handout
On flip chart or overhead:

- Definition of Opportunity Structure
- Fads, Trends & Mega Trends
- Steps for Tree Activity
- Working with the Structure of Opportunity

PURPOSE:

1. To encourage creativity in exploring possibilities for work.
2. To discuss the meaning of work.
3. To discuss work and the opportunity structure.
4. To provide a strategy for identifying future opportunities based on trends.
5. To begin to integrate trends into career planning.

BACKGROUNDER: ADDITIONAL TRAINER RESOURCES

Megatrends - The Hybrid Approach	Page 69

TIMES, THEY ARE-A-CHANGIN'!

Objectives:

- Explain the changes in educational requirements and skill levels of a variety of occupations
- Demonstrate occupational information gathering skills

Overview:

Technology and other influences are rapidly changing the world of work and occupations as we know them. This exercise gives participants an opportunity to look back at some occupations and see how much they have changed within the last few years.

Method:

1. Divide into small groups of 4-5 participants
2. Assign each group an occupation that has encountered significant changes. For example
   - Auto Mechanic
   - Farmer
   - Secretary
   - General Practitioner
   - Assembly Line Worker
   - Accountant
   - Draftsperson
   - Entrepreneur
3. Provide each small group with a flip chart and markers.
4. Have the groups work through each section of the Activity sheet and record their answers on the flip chart paper.
5. Have the groups present their information to the full group. Allow time for discussion.

Suggestions:

- You may wish to repeat this activity, having each small group complete the Activity Sheet based on an occupation of their choice.
- You may take this activity a step further and have participants interview people in these occupations to find out what it was like ten years ago, what it is like today, and what it will be like in the future.

Activity Sheet

Occupation: ______________________________

Twenty Years Ago	Today	Twenty Years From Now
Duties:	Duties:	Duties:
Skill/Education level:	Skill/Education level:	Skill/Education level:

Source: Heart Beats: Creative Career Awareness – Teacher's Guide and Activities. Carol Dunford. Centre for Career Development Innovation, Concordia College and Youth Works Society of Alberta

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

1. Introduction

In an ideal world, people would be able to identify and pursue occupations that perfectly match their interests, abilities and temperaments and that provide them with the incomes to support the lifestyle they desire. In the real world, however, the job market has limitations. It varies from one location to another, depending on the region's businesses and industries. It also varies over time, as industries come and go and communities shift. By thinking about the labour market as an "opportunity structure", we can use labour market information to creatively extrapolate work alternatives.

2. Exercise: The Times They Are A Changin'

(30 minutes)
Adapted from: *Heartbeats*

Lead participants through the following activity:

- Distribute HO : The Times They Are a Changin'.
- Divide group into smaller groups of 4-5, and assign each group an occupation (e.g. auto mechanic, secretary, general practitioner, accountant, farmer).
- Ask each group to think about the duties of their assigned occupation. What were they 20 years ago? What are they now? How will they change in 20 years from now?
- Ask groups to be prepared to report back on a few significant shifts and on any opportunities they can identify that might result from these shifts.

Facilitate group reports and conduct a brief plenary discussion on opportunities.

Note that this exercise is a useful warm-up to thinking about trends and how they affect opportunity.

3. The Structure of Opportunity

Adapted from: *Steady As We Go: Career Awareness for Drifters*

Draw from the following to lead a discussion on work and opportunity:

Funk and Wagnalls Dictionary gives the following two definitions of the word "work" — continued exertion, whether physical or mental, directed to some purpose or end; and the acts, obligations, etc., that one does or undertakes in return for something of value, such as money.

Discussion

Ask participants:

What does the word "work" mean to you? Does work include unpaid labour? What sort of unpaid work do you or your family members do? How important is unpaid work to the standard of living you and your family enjoy?

Provide the following thought-provoking examples:

Illustrative Examples

- Mary and Joanne live next door to each other. Mary is known in the community for her skills in knitting. Joanne loves gardening and always plants a few vegetables behind her home. Mary knits sweaters and socks for Joanne's family but she never charges any money. Joanne gives Mary potatoes, tomatoes and carrots at harvest time. Are Mary and Joanne working or just enjoying their hobbies?

- People in Funtown are proud of their community, especially their recreation programs. Several people volunteer each year to organize concerts, sports tournaments and an annual festival. Louise is the recreation committee's treasurer, and it is her job to keep a record of all funds that are raised and money that is spent. She also helps to plan the committee's activities for the year. The volunteers generally meet for a couple of hours a month but, during the summer, Louise often spends five or more hours a week doing the books, paying bills and helping in other ways. In some ways, she gets more satisfaction out of her treasurer's position than she does from her job. Louise loves being with a lot of people but her job as a bookkeeper doesn't give her much opportunity to socialize. That was one of the reasons she started volunteering, to have the chance to get together with friends. The other main reason was that she wanted to do something to make the community a better place to live. As a member of the recreation committee, is Louise engaging in leisure or work?

- Joe is a good fisherman and works long and hard during the season. When the fishery closes down for the winter months, he mends his nets, repairs his boat, hunts with friends with whom he shares a licence, sets some rabbit snares and cuts firewood. Last fall, he put a new roof on the house. Is Joe working while he is drawing EI?

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OPPORTUNITY STRUCTURE

What are the industries, services, resources in your region (including paid and unpaid work opportunities)?

How can you adapt to the opportunities in your region?

How can you influence the opportunities in your region?

Define opportunity structure

The "opportunity structure" of an area refers to the opportunities people have for work and consequently can limit the choices a person has for work, whether paid or unpaid. It is determined by the industries, resources and services in the region.

Cities generally have larger opportunity structures for paid work than rural areas. Rural areas are often tied to one natural resource, such as farming, fishing, mining, forestry, oil or energy.

On the other hand, rural areas tend to have a greater opportunity structure for unpaid work. Such activities may include cutting firewood, building a house or barn, fishing, gardening, picking berries or raising livestock for one's own consumption.

Discussion

Invite participants to think of the opportunities in the area where they live. Ask the following questions (either in large group or as a small group activity):

- Is your opportunity structure wide or narrow? Is there a wide variety of occupational choice there, or do you live in a single industry town?
- Would you describe your opportunity structure as more formal or informal. Are most opportunities in the form of paid positions in organizations or do opportunities for bartering or exchanging goods/services exist?
- Is your opportunity structure open or closed? Does it welcome new industries, ideas and innovations or does it strive to maintain its status quo?
- Would you say that your opportunity structure tends to be visionary or despairing?

Early knowledge of the opportunity structure

Note that people are connected to their environment. They acquire knowledge, skills, values and perspectives from what they hear, see and experience. Career aspirations and expectations are shaped by these personal experiences and perceptions. Growing up in an age where jobs are plentiful will produce different career attitudes and behaviours than those that would evolve from growing up in a recessionary period.

A young person in a single-industry town will have a different view of employment prospects than someone who, because he or she lives in a city, has been exposed to a wide range of business and occupational opportunities. Living in a community or neighbourhood where people regularly exchange labour or products on the barter system will foster different attitudes toward informal work than living in a place where all transactions are paid in cash.

Adapting to and/or influencing opportunity structures

Challenge participants to think about how they can adapt to and/or change their own opportunity structure. Brainstorm strategies together. Examples include the following:

- move from an area where opportunity is limited to one which offers more opportunities;
- get training or education that can be applied to work in your home community;
- acquire experience through paid and volunteer work to develop skills that can be applied to work in your area of residence;
- create your own occupation by determining a service or product that people want and deliver in your community.

Non-traditional career paths

Note that career paths vary from one person to another and also from one location to another. People who tend to be risk-takers are more likely to sacrifice stability for other personal rewards and to change occupations more frequently than others. The growth of part-time and temporary jobs at the expense of full-time positions since the mid-1970s has forced others to take on multiple jobs. Some people supplement their employment income with home-based businesses or informal work. Others work at different jobs during different seasons. People adapt to their opportunity structure in various ways. There is no single career path that is suited to every individual or to every opportunity structure.

External influences on opportunity structure

Note that the opportunity structure of an area is not permanent. It is important to recognize the dynamic nature of opportunity. Provide the following examples and invite participants to generate others from their own experience:

- Industries change the way they operate or what they produce. For instance, more fishing companies are producing fresh-frozen products now than they did 50 years ago, when the main product was salt fish. Many computer companies started off as manufacturers of adding machines.

- Some industries reduce the need for workers by introducing technology. For example, the forest industry is now buying machines that cut and strip logs more quickly than loggers. Dictaphones have taken over from stenographers, and computerized assembly lines have replaced people in several manufacturing sectors.

- Industries may come and go. There are many examples of this — pulp and paper companies, sawmills and mines in rural and northern communities of many provinces, and manufacturers of an assortment of products from appliances and car parts to paints and chemicals in urban communities.

- New industries may develop. People who see a demand for a product or service often create their own businesses. For example, aquaculture is growing in importance in the fishing industry. Polling has become popular and has sparked a demand for independent polling companies. Environment engineering companies are growing to meet the demand by people for a cleaner and safer world. At the same time as technology has displaced workers, it has also created new opportunities.

Feeling positive about change

We live in a world of uncertainty and constant change. Preparing for employment in tomorrow's world is difficult because we don't know what changes to expect and we don't know how much these changes will influence our lives. Many changes are beyond our control. Occupations that will become central to society in the future may not yet exist. Occupations on which we depend today may disappear tomorrow.

Nobody can precisely predict the future. Consequently, there is no guarantee that a chosen path, no matter how well thought out, will ensure personal success. By thinking about change and its implications, however, it is possible to make "educated guesses" about the direction of change and its affect on opportunity.

31a

Fad : Fashion craze
Inconsistent direction over time

Trend : Change in attitude toward a new structure occurs over time
Stable for 5-10 years

Megatrend : Trend that lasts over a large period of time (20+ years)
Resist even the unexpected

4. Fads, Trends & Megatrends

Opportunities can evolve from anticipating the outcomes of trends. For example, society's growing concern about pollution has produced demands for environmental impact assessments, the development of environmentally friendly products and environmental engineering. Canada's aging population is fostering growth in health care services, tourist packages and recreational programs for seniors. Rapid advances in communications technologies and the diffusion of personal computers has created new demands for distance educators, computer technicians and software designers. Many opportunities are yet to be discovered.

Exercises in trend extrapolation can help people develop the skills to actively identify opportunities for themselves.

Definition of terms

Help participants distinguish between fads, trends, and megatrends. Review the following definitions, brainstorming examples of each:

Fad: is a fashion, style or craze that is temporary and has no consistent direction over time. Note that while some people have made their fortunes from fads, they are not as reliable in predicting opportunity as trends.

Trend: is a change in attitude that occurs over time. Trends generally last 5-10 years, but can be disrupted by unexpected events.

Megatrend: is a trend that spans a long period of time (20 years+). Megatrends are durable, and tend to withstand the effects of most unexpected events.

Brainstorm list of trends

Have participants generate a list of trends they have observed. Make sure that the list contains trends, as opposed to fads.

5. Large Group Exercise: The Tree

Trend "extrapolation" is an important skill, not only for those who are interested in setting up a business but also for those who want to be proactive about their job search. While there are publications that forecast occupational trends, these are often outdated by the time they reach the community level and are not likely to be regionally specific.

There is no simple way to predict the future. With this in mind, there are strategies to "sniff the future". A simple approach is presented here. A second, called the "hybrid approach" is included in your **Backgrounder**. (Note. Facilitators working with people who have limited knowledge of news events may find the approach presented here more appropriate. If participants seem to have a solid grasp of the major issues facing society, the hybrid approach may be more appropriate.)

Creativity will greatly enhance the value of the exercises. Participants should be encouraged to think of themselves as science fiction writers so they feel free to play with ideas to be a little outrageous.

A crucial element of both options is relating these larger trends to personal experience. The final two steps of the exercise aim to provide this link between the external world and the individual.

Trends can be categorized into at least three areas: social, economic and political. Refer to your list of brainstormed trends and distinguish the three areas. In this exercise the visual image of a tree serves as a metaphor for the various components of a trend — its roots, (ie what holds it in our society) its trunk (the substance of the trend), its branches (ie: what evidence exists of the trend in terms of current goods and services) and, finally, its buds (ie: the future -- what goods/services can be imagined if the trend really takes hold?). The following example demonstrates the process.

Illustrative Example

Step 1

Identify a major social trend.

- Example: Canada's population is aging.

Step 2

Determine the strength of the trend by looking at its roots and its limits.

- Canada's aging population is rooted in lower birth rates following a post-World War II baby boom. Medical advances have increased life expectancy for these baby boomers. Short of any major catastrophe, these people who are now middle-aged are likely to remain in the work force for at least another 20 years and to live 15 years or so beyond retirement. The trend should last 35 years.

Step 3

Consider the demands for goods and services created by the trend so far.

- The size of the post-war baby boom population has influenced the entertainment industry by demands for programs that address its interests. It has created new demands for recreation for middle-aged people. It has created a demand for research on aging and health. It has prompted a large growth in financial services such as registered retirement savings, investment consulting and so on. Because many are now in senior positions at work, there are many people who enjoy financial security and have above average vacation times. This, in turn, creates demands for holiday packages and leisure activities. Others, however, have been displaced by job losses in the economy, and these people require services in areas such as counselling and job retraining.

Step 4

Predict the demands for goods and services that will arise in the future.

- As people get older, they are going to encounter more health problems. The increased emphasis on research into health and aging is likely to continue, and there is probably going to be a greater demand for pharmaceutical products, medical aids and foods that meet various dietary requirements. After they reach retirement age, these people are going to want recreation and entertainment programs that are tailored to their interests, needs and limitations. Most of the post-war baby boomers have their own homes but maintaining these homes will be physically difficult when they are older. Society can choose to build institutions to house these people, or it can set up home care services to help them stay in their own homes. The cost of institutional care suggests there will probably be more demand for home care services, including health education, food preparation, minor medical assistance and household chores. Organizing such activities will create demands for development and funding of social programs for seniors. Having a lot of people retire at about the same time will create other problems for society. The country will have to raise money to pay pension benefits, and it will have to ensure there are enough younger people to take over the jobs that are now held by people nearing retirement. Government may overcome these problems by increasing immigration. However, immigrants will need services to help them adjust to Canadian society and to learn the language and the skills needed in the labour market, and they will need housing. There is also likely to be an increased demand for foods and other items that suit their tastes and interests.

Step 5

Determine whether the trend is evident in your own community or region and what is being done to meet the present and future demands created by the trend.

- What proportion of the community's population is middle-aged or older? What are they buying? What services do they require? What services are being met? Which need to be met? What goods or services would they likely use if those were available? Who in the community can provide those goods and services? Who can afford to buy them?

Step 6

Determine how your own interests, skills and abilities could be used to meet the demands created by the trend.

- Do I like working directly with older people? If so, what kind of help could I offer? Would it be in the area of health care, recreation, household chores, financial planning or something else? What skills do I need to do this, and where do I learn them? Are there enough older people in the community to make this effort worthwhile, or would I have to serve a larger region? If that is the case, would I want to travel that much? Even if I do not want to work directly with older people, what can I do that would meet their needs and my interests and abilities? Is there something I could make or buy that I could then sell to them? Would my sales be limited to the community or region, or could I sell these products throughout the province, the country or even on the international market? What skills do I need? Where do I learn them? Once I have the skills, how do I get started? Who could help me? Do I want to take the risk? Could I share the risk with a partner?

STEPS

1. Is it a fad? Trend? Megatrend? What are the roots? How deep? How long? How many?
2. What are the branches? What demands for goods and services are already visible?
3. What are the buds? What demands can you imagine? Be outrageous!
4. What is the status in your own community? Is it being done? Overdone? Not yet done?
5. How might you make a contribution? How does it match your abilities, skills, interests?

WORKING WITH THE OPPORTUNITY STRUCTURE

- Think about changes and their implications "sniff the future"
- Develop skills in identifying gaps and anticipating needs and in finding opportunities

"Many opportunities are yet to be discovered"

Demonstration

Lead participants through the process of building a tree together in plenary. Choose one trend from the brainstormed list and complete the 6 steps together. Use the flip chart to record your tree. Elicit enough detail at each step to prepare participants to work with another trend in small groups.

6. **Small Group Exercise**
(45 minutes)
The "Tree"

When participants are clear on the steps and the process, divide them into groups of four to six. Provide at least 45 minutes to complete a tree. They may work with the example given, or select another trend. Encourage them to be as creative and divergent in their thinking as possible.

Debrief

Provide an opportunity for small groups to report their findings to the full group. Emphasize that there is no magic wand. There is only a "way of thinking." Those who can anticipate trends have an edge over those who do not. Trend "extrapolation" provides a tool to identify opportunities in a creative and imaginative way.

7. **Individual Follow-up**

Encourage participants to review the newspaper, especially the business and the observer sections. Invite them to cut out any articles or events which they see as part of a bigger trend — or which suggest an emerging trend.

Invite participants to develop their own tree using a different trend as an independent assignment.

Ensure that time is devoted to following up on independent activities. It is a way of thinking which participants can carry with them in their career journey.

TOPIC: ACCESSING LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION

- Networking
- Information Interviewing
- Model and Practice

YOU WILL NEED:

On flip chart or overhead:

- Information Interviewing
- Benefits of Information Interviewing
- Skills of Information Interviewing
- Rules of Feedback
- Practice Instructions

PURPOSE:

1. To identify points of access to labour market information.
2. To explore strategies to maximize information gleaned from networking and information interviewing.
3. To present strategies to assist participants to gather information and to learn from their work experience.

BACKGROUNDER: ADDITIONAL FACILITATOR RESOURCES

Career Information Resources and Self-Help Tools	Page 73
Summary of Key Themes *(Making Career Sense of Labour Market Information)*	Page 76
Commonly Asked Questions	Page 83
Networking Activities *(CareerWorld)*	Page 90
Networking Activities *(Workforce in Transition)*	Page 95
The Information Interview *(Knowledge for Youth About Careers)*	Page 98

1. Introduction

Draw from the following text to introduce this section:

Accessing a full range of information can seem an overwhelming task in light of the complexity of the labour market.

Sources of labour market information are virtually endless. Every interaction we have is an opportunity to gather more. Some examples of sources of labour market information include:

- career information delivery systems - NOC;
- written materials - OCDD;
- audio and video-tapes, laser discs and computer-based systems;
- networking;
- job shadowing;
- internships, moonlighting, part-time work;
- information interviews; and
- volunteer work.

Make connections with the list of sources of labour market information that the group brainstormed in "The Structure of the Labour Market" section. Note that there are a range national, provincial, regional and local sources of information about the current structure of the labour market as well as occupation-specific information.

Aside from information materials that are available for reference, it is possible to gather important information from interactions and work-related experiences.

2. Networking

Note that useful insights can be gained from networking. Most of us have a multitude of networks in our daily lives, both formal and informal.

Use the following text to present networking as a method of accessing labour market information.

Define networks
Adapted from:
CareerWorld

A network is defined as a "group of interconnected people having similar goals and interests." You probably have a network of friends and acquaintances. These people are more likely to pass opportunities your way than to give tips, information, and suggestions to people outside the network.

INFORMATION INTERVIEWING

- Meeting with someone who represents a field of interest (or a worker in an occupation/job of interest
- Collect information that is relevant to you. You choose who and what questions

BENEFITS OF INFORMATION INTERVIEWING

- Ist hand information
- Networking
- Personal perspective - path, values, style
- Observation
- Practice communication/ interview skills

For example, if one of your friends heard of an exciting job opening, the friend would probably share the information with you. The same thing happens in the workplace. People get to know each other, they form a network and they pass on useful information to others in the network. Simply being aware of your network as a resource and asking questions is an excellent way of gaining access to information. Be aware, however, that networks do tend to have rules and getting access to new networks sometimes requires targeted effort.

3. The Information Interview: What is it?

Introduce Information Interviewing using the following text:

Information interviewing is another highly effective means of collecting information about a specific field of interest, an occupation or a job. An information interview generally consists of a meeting (preferably face to face) with someone who represents a field of interest or is actually doing a job that you want to find out more about. In many ways, it is more formal than networking which can occur on an ongoing basis through our natural interactions.

The benefits of information interviewing

Information interviewing has the advantage of being a way to collect information that is relevant to your specific needs because you choose *who* to interview and *what* questions to ask.

The benefits of an information interview are many.

- It gives first-hand information and a realistic view of the field. You can learn about factors never covered elsewhere. If the interview is carried out at the work site (the preferred place), you can observe the work environment directly as well.
- It helps build contacts with people who may be helpful in the future. (Remember networking!) The person being interviewed may give you referrals to others in the field. This will enlarge the network of people who may be helpful to you.
- It is a great opportunity to practice communication skills and interviewing without the stress associated with a job interview.

- It is a chance to hear how others have developed their career paths. You can gain a more personal perspective, gathering not only traditional labour market information, but also learning such important, but often neglected, information as:
  - what kind of personality or personal style is prevalent (most successful) in this type of work;
  - what "values" drive the work; and
  - what the primary rewards are.

This kind of information can then be assessed against your own self-knowledge. For example, does my personality match? Do I value the same things as my prospective co-workers? Will the benefits of the job fulfil my needs?

Portfolio: Information Interviewing

Detailed guidelines to assist participants through information interviewing are provided in their **Portfolio**.

4. Model and Practice Information Interviewing in Pairs (70 minutes)

Note that it is important to build gradually towards conducting information interviews in the community. You may wish to begin by modelling an interview for the group. You may also have a guest speaker come in and be interviewed by the full group. Participants may interview each other, family members, friends and, ultimately, representatives from a field that interests them. Encourage participants to practice the skills of effective interviewing, complete advance research, and follow up appropriately.

The purpose of practicing in pairs is to hone participants' skills and to demonstrate the power of interviewing as an information-gathering tool. Before setting up the practice session, spend time preparing for each of the following skills:

- Building Rapport: Conduct a discussion with participant on how to build rapport. Brainstorm with the group as many concrete strategies as possible and provide opportunities for coached practice.

SKILLS OF INFORMATION INTERVIEWING

- Building Rapport
- Asking Open Questions
- Summarizing
- Feedback

RULES OF FEEDBACK

Immediate - here and now

Descriptive - as opposed to evaluative

Positive - constructive

Specific - as opposed to vague

"I" - (my perspective)

- Asking Open Questions: Open questions are questions that cannot be answered with a simple "yes" or "no", but rather require some detail. Have participants work in pairs trying to carry on a 1-minute conversation using only closed questions. Then have pairs shift to including open questions for 1-minute. Discuss as a large group how open questions encourage dialogue.

- Summarizing: Underscore the importance of summarizing at the end of an interview as a means of expressing appreciation, confirming accuracy of your understanding and drawing the interview to closure. Provide opportunity for coached practice of summarizing.

- Feedback: Highlight the importance of feedback as a critical employability skill. Many employers report that their new hires have considerable difficulty giving and receiving feedback. The following "Rules of Feedback" can serve as a guide.

  Feedback should be:

  1. Immediate - deliver feedback as close to the event as possible.
  2. Descriptive - (as opposed to evaluative) describe the behaviour observed.
  3. Positive - reinforce behaviours that are positive.
  4. Specific - provide as much concrete detail possible in describing the behaviour.

  Elicit examples of feedback from group members to reinforce the rules. We tend to assume that giving and receiving feedback comes naturally, but it is a high order skill that will likely require practice and coaching. Effective feedback provides the receiver with a clear directive regarding what behaviours should and should not be repeated in the future.

INFORMATION INTERVIEWING

3 Things you - know well
- can speak about

Interviewer

1. Choose topic that most genuinely interest you.
2. Take time to prepare your questions (use your Portfolio)
3. Focus on practising skills
   - Building rapport
   - Open questioning
   - Summarizing

Interviewee

After the interview, take time to give the interviewer feedback re: the use of the 3 skills. What helped?

- Rules of Feedback
- Timekeeper

Once participants have had opportunities to practice each of the four skills, set the stage for practicing information interviewing. Have each participant write down 2-3 things that they know about/could teach someone. Their list might include a hobby, an interest, paid or volunteer work they have done. Have participants choose a partner (preferably someone they do not know well). Review the following directions and the roles of each partner:

1. Exchange lists.

2. Choose initial roles - One will be the interviewer; the other the interviewee.

3. The interviewer is asked to:

   - Read your partner's list and choose the topic that most genuinely interest you.

   - Take time to prepare your interview questions. You may refer to your **Portfolio** for support material.

   - Interview your partner for 30 minutes. In addition to eliciting relevant information, try to practice the following skills:

     a) build rapport (ex. establish and respect the time frame, be prepared, make appropriate eye contact);

     b) ask open questions (ie. questions that cannot be answered with a simple "yes" or "no", but rather require some detail);

     c) summarize (ie. conclude the interview with a summary statement that highlights key learnings/relevant information. For example: *"Thank you for your time. What I got most from this interview is ...".*

4. The interviewee is asked to:

   a) answer the interviewers' questions as fully and honestly as possible;

b) following the interview, provide the interviewer with feedback regarding their use of the 3 skills (building rapport, open questioning and summarizing).

Provide 70 minutes for pairs to practice interviewing each other (30 minutes per interview, and 10 minutes for feedback.

Debrief in Plenary

In a large group, highlight key learning points.

- What kinds of questions were most effective in eliciting information?
- What additional steps should be taken in preparing for an interview in the community?

Help participants to gradually build towards information interviewing a person that represents a field of interest for them. You will want to set the pace for learning to match your participants. Some may wish to interview family and/or friends first. Others may need more time to practice in the group. Others may be ready to move quite quickly to interviewing occupational representatives. Assess your group and structure your activities accordingly.

As facilitators, you will serve as a resource person, an advocate and support for participants before, during and after their interviews. Remember to follow up with participants after interviews and encourage reflective work in their Portfolios.

5. Accessing Labour Market Information on-the-job

Getting access to information materials, networking, job shadowing and information interviewing can be incorporated into work experience. Intelligence can also be gained from the work experience itself — be it paid or unpaid.

The key to learning from experience is *reflection*. The **Portfolio** can be a powerful tool here. Encourage participants to record their experiences at work regularly, reflecting on change, growth, challenges and accomplishments. Talk with them about their experiences and their learnings as they go.

TOPIC: EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

- Profile
- Assessment

YOU WILL NEED:

Employability Skills Profile
Employability Skills Assessment

PURPOSE:

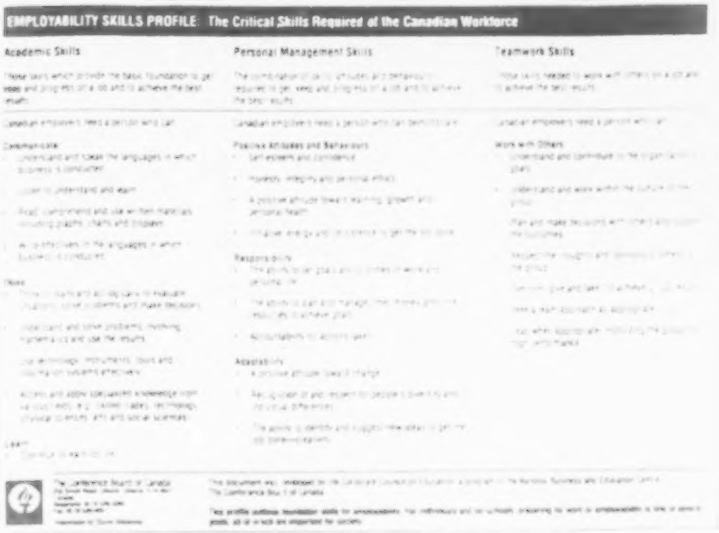
1. To present the Employability Skills Profile and have learners connect skill accomplishments to the profile.
2. To incorporate the skills profile as a feedback tool throughout participant work experience.

BACKGROUNDER: ADDITIONAL FACILITATOR RESOURCES

Workforce in Transition (Hoppin) - Strengths and Weaknesses	Page 109

CAREER DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES

- Capacity to vision yourself in the future in a positive way.
- Ability to see alternatives in the labour market.
- Knowledge of skills and a sense of purpose and direction.
- A plan to start and a sense of personal agency



EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS PROFILE: The Critical Skills Required of the Canadian Workforce

Academic Skills	Personal Management Skills	Teamwork Skills

The Conference Board of Canada

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1. Introduction Employability Skills Profile

Introduce employability skills as follows:

Until now, we have presented ways to explore the world of work and to infuse personal meaning into the career building process.

Recall the Career Development Outcomes. In exploring outward, we have been seeking to build a positive vision of self in the future and to broaden the range of work alternatives. Underpinning all that we have done is the importance of developing skills. Particularly, we have endeavoured to provide opportunities to practice transferable skills that participants can carry with them throughout their careers.

Brainstorm examples of transferable employability skills. Examples might include the following:

- communication
- initiative
- leadership
- teamwork

These are skills for self-management. They are not limited to specific technical skills required for a particular job. Rather they are broad transferable skills that enable us to be far more successful at any job and to manage the many transitions that will characterize our career development.

2. Employability Skills Profile

The Conference Board of Canada has conducted considerable research on the critical skills necessary for career success. They have surveyed employers from across Canada, asking them what skills are most highly valued in their work places. The results are published in the Employability Skills Profile. Employers are increasingly aware of the importance of employability skills and are beginning to place more emphasis on them in their hiring and promotion policies.

Take time to discuss the profile. Elicit examples from the group of how each skill might be demonstrated in a range of work settings. Encourage participants to identify concrete behaviours that demonstrate each skill.

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Employability Skills Profile: What Are Employers Looking For?

READ EACH SKILL, EVALUATE YOURSELF AND MARK THE MOST APPROPRIATE.

1. Academic Skills

Communicate

- Listen to understand and learn

1 Weak   2 Low   3 Average   4 Good   5 Very Good

I would like to do some work in this area ☐ Yes ☐ No

- Read, comprehend, and use written materials including graphs, charts, and displays

1 Weak   2 Low   3 Average   4 Good   5 Very Good

I would like to do some work in this area ☐ Yes ☐ No

- Write effectively in the languages in which business is conducted

1 Weak   2 Low   3 Average   4 Good   5 Very Good

I would like to do some work in this area ☐ Yes ☐ No

Think

- Think critically to evaluate situations, solve problems and make decisions

1 Weak   2 Low   3 Average   4 Good   5 Very Good

I would like to do some work in this area ☐ Yes ☐ No

- Understand and solve problems involving mathematics and use the results

1 Weak   2 Low   3 Average   4 Good   5 Very Good

I would like to do some work in this area ☐ Yes ☐ No

- Use technology, instruments, tools and information systems effectively

1 Weak   2 Low   3 Average   4 Good   5 Very Good

I would like to do some work in this area ☐ Yes ☐ No

- Access and apply specialized knowledge from various fields (e.g., skilled trades, arts, social sciences)

1 Weak   2 Low   3 Average   4 Good   5 Very Good

I would like to do some work in this area ☐ Yes ☐ No

Learn

- Continue to learn for life

1 Weak   2 Low   3 Average   4 Good   5 Very Good

I would like to do some work in this area ☐ Yes ☐ No

2. Personal Management Skills

Positive Attitudes and Behaviours

- Self-esteem and confidence

1 Weak   2 Low   3 Average   4 Good   5 Very Good

I would like to do some work in this area ☐ Yes ☐ No

- Honesty, integrity, and personal ethics

1 Weak   2 Low   3 Average   4 Good   5 Very Good

I would like to do some work in this area ☐ Yes ☐ No

- A positive attitude toward learning, growth, and personal health

1 Weak   2 Low   3 Average   4 Good   5 Very Good

I would like to do some work in this area ☐ Yes ☐ No

- Initiative, energy and persistence to get the job done

1 Weak   2 Low   3 Average   4 Good   5 Very Good

I would like to do some work in this area ☐ Yes ☐ No

Responsibility

- The ability to set goals and priorities in work and personal life

1 Weak   2 Low   3 Average   4 Good   5 Very Good

I would like to do some work in this area ☐ Yes ☐ No

- The ability to plan and manage time, money and resources to achieve goals

1 Weak   2 Low   3 Average   4 Good   5 Very Good

I would like to do some work in this area ☐ Yes ☐ No

- Accountability for actions taken

1 Weak   2 Low   3 Average   4 Good   5 Very Good

I would like to do some work in this area ☐ Yes ☐ No

Adaptability

- A positive attitude toward change

1 Weak   2 Low   3 Average   4 Good   5 Very Good

I would like to do some work in this area ☐ Yes ☐ No

- Recognition of and respect for people's diversity and individual differences

1 Weak   2 Low   3 Average   4 Good   5 Very Good

I would like to do some work in this area ☐ Yes ☐ No

- The ability to identify and suggest new ideas to get the job done-creatively

1 Weak   2 Low   3 Average   4 Good   5 Very Good

I would like to do some work in this area ☐ Yes ☐ No

3. Work with Others

- Understand and contribute to the organization's goals

1 Weak   2 Low   3 Average   4 Good   5 Very Good

I would like to do some work in this area ☐ Yes ☐ No

- Understand and work with the culture of the group

1 Weak   2 Low   3 Average   4 Good   5 Very Good

I would like to do some work in this area ☐ Yes ☐ No

- Plan and make decisions with others in the group

1 Weak   2 Low   3 Average   4 Good   5 Very Good

I would like to do some work in this area ☐ Yes ☐ No

- Respect the thoughts and opinions of others in the group

1 Weak   2 Low   3 Average   4 Good   5 Very Good

I would like to do some work in this area ☐ Yes ☐ No

- Exercise "give and take" to achieve group results

1 Weak   2 Low   3 Average   4 Good   5 Very Good

I would like to do some work in this area ☐ Yes ☐ No

- Lead when appropriate, mobilizing the group for high performance

1 Weak   2 Low   3 Average   4 Good   5 Very Good

I would like to do some work in this area ☐ Yes ☐ No

Adapted from Employability Skills Profile: What Are Employers Looking For? Conference Board of Canada

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3. **Employability Skills Assessment** as a feedback tool
Adapted from: *Making Career Sense of Labour Market Information*

Orient participants to the Skills Assessment tool in their **Portfolio**. Discuss how you might use this for self-assessment and/or skill reviews. You might agree on group procedures to use the assessment tool and/or strike individual agreements for incorporating the tool into learning and feedback sessions. Note that employability skills are not taught in one session. This session is intended to highlight and consolidate learning from previous and future sessions. Employability Skills are developed over time, through experience, reflection and integration.

As participants engage in work experiences, facilitators have the opportunity to promote the development of employability skills by using the Assessment as a self-monitoring and feedback tool. Meet regularly with participants to discuss their progress at work. Use the Conference Board's profile of employability skills and the Assessment to gauge with participants their progress with respect to each skill.

- Can they identify situations in their paid/unpaid work in which they used the skills?
- Are they pleased with the way they demonstrated the skill?
- Would they do anything differently next time?

Note that if there is no opportunity to develop and demonstrate these skills in their current work experience, it may be necessary to explore this with their supervisors or to add other work experience to their program.

As already noted, employability skills are not developed at one sitting. For example, we don't develop the ability to communicate effectively by completing one exercise that focuses on communication skills. Rather, we build these skills over time, through our many experiences. As we move into the next section of this program, we'll be shifting from exploring outward to identify opportunities in the labour market to exploring inward to better understand our personal values, skills and interests. Throughout, we'll be using exercises to supplement and complement this reflective work.

TOPIC: PERSONAL METAPHORS

- Four metaphors
- Own metaphors

YOU WILL NEED:

N/A

PURPOSE:

1. To explore creative ways of thinking about the future.
2. To introduce participants to the power of narrative/metaphors in career development.
3. To reinforce the connection between how we vision the future and how we act to create that future.

BACKGROUNDER: ADDITIONAL FACILITATOR RESOURCES

N/A

CAREER DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES

- Capacity to vision yourself in the future in a positive way.
- Ability to see alternatives in the labour market.
- Knowledge of skills and a sense of purpose and direction.
- A plan to start and a sense of personal agency

1. Introduction

In the program, we're now shifting from an exploration outward (exploring opportunities in the labour market) to an exploration inward (assisting participants to explore how their unique skills, interests, beliefs and values fit with the range of labour market opportunities). It is important that as you initiate this shift, participants understand the purpose of exploring inward within the context of the career development outcomes. In order for the labour market to make sense and be meaningful, we need to create a context of personal relevance and ownership. Recall that critical career development outcomes include:

1. The capacity to vision yourself in the future in a positive way.
2. The ability to see alternatives in the labour market.
3. The knowledge of skills and a sense of purpose and direction.
4. A plan to start and a sense of personal agency.

As you shift into exploring inward, help participants connect their activities and learning back to these outcomes.

Revisit Group Norms

You will also want to be aware that new norms may be required as the group moves into activities that are less structured and that may represent a higher level of personal risk. While the focus is still educational, as opposed to therapeutic, activities in this section will ask people to show more of themselves. Helping the group to set boundaries to ensure continued safety and comfort will be important.

The following activity is intended as a "warm up" to looking inward, drawing out personal skills, interests, beliefs and values, and relating these to opportunities and career directions.

2. Warm Up Exercise 4 Metaphors
(30 minutes)
Adapted from:
Creative Decision-Making

Introduce this exercise as a way to explore how participants see the future. This exercise uses narrative and metaphor as a creative way of tapping into our imagined future.

Discuss with participants the idea that how we imagine the future can be an enormous influencer of how the future will actually be. Encourage participants to think about how they see their future. Introduce the use of metaphors. Define what a metaphor is and discuss several examples of metaphors that participants have come across or used. Popular music often uses metaphors in lyrics (ex. Life is a highway). Is there a metaphor that captures their vision for the future? The following four examples can be used as a catalyst for participants. Read out the four descriptions to the group once. Repeat them a second time. Invite participants to relax and close their eyes if they would like to while you read.

1. *Roller Coaster*

   The future is a great roller coaster. It twists ahead of us in the dark, although we can only see each part as we come to it. We can sometimes see around the bend, but the future is fixed and determined. We are locked in our seats and nothing we may know or do will change the course that is laid out for us.

2. *Mighty River*

   The future is a mighty river. The great force of history flows along, carrying us with it. Its course can be changed but only by natural disasters, like earthquakes and landslides, or by massive concerted human efforts on a similar scale. However, we are free as individuals to adapt to the course of history, either well or poorly. By looking ahead, we can avoid sandbars and whirlpools and pick the best path through any rapids.

3. *Great Ocean*

   The future is a great ocean. There are many possible destinations, and many different paths to each destination. By taking advantage of the main currents of change, keeping a sharp lookout posted, and moving carefully in uncharted waters, a good navigator can get safely to the charted destination, barring a typhoon or other disaster that cannot be predicted or avoided.

4. *Colossal Dice Game*

> The future is entirely random, a colossal dice game. Every second things happen that could have happened another way to produce another future. Since everything is chance, all we can do is play the game, pray to the gods of fortune and enjoy what good luck comes our way.

[The above is an excerpt from Career Decision-Making.]

Debrief

Ask participants to reflect on whether there was one metaphor that "spoke" more directly to them than the others? How did it relate to how they see their future? Encourage participants to think of their own personal metaphor for the future. It may be one of the four presented, or it may be a completely different image. Encourage participants to record their own metaphor in their **Portfolio.**

TOPIC: VALUES

- Ice Breaker
- Values Auction
- What is a Value?
- The Onion
- Where Have We Come From?

YOU WILL NEED:

Work Value Items Handout
On flip chart or overhead:
  - Values List
  - Definition
  - Onion

Where Have We Come From? Handout

PURPOSE:

1. To identify personal values and recognize their impact on career decisions.
2. To link values to the changing world of work.

BACKGROUNDER: ADDITIONAL FACILITATOR RESOURCES

Values Exercises	Page 112

Work Value Items	$ Invested
To acquire a blank cheque for a year's travel around the world	
To be president of a large corporation	
To help blind children learn how to read Braille	
To be an executive member of a popular club in your community	
To work at a job with freedom from the control of others	
To win a million-dollar lottery	
To be responsible for the well-being of a group of employees	
To work at a job that your conscience tells you is "right" for you	
To be in a position to protect the rights of all people	
To be able to work regular hours, five days a week	
To live on a tropical island where conditions never change	
To do something creative at work on a regular basis	
To be able to control your time and work schedule	
To direct the work of 10 employees	
To be considered an expert in your occupational field	
To represent a company by travelling to Asia and Europe	
To do work that benefits society as a whole	
To be voted outstanding person of the year in your province	
To bring a debt-ridden company back to financial success	
To earn $85,000 a year	
To become famous	
To help needy, deprived people	
To find a cure for cancer	
To work with people you like	
	[illegible] $500.00

Source: CareerWorld, John S. Freeman and Mary Beauchamp, [illegible] Books Inc., 1994

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1. Ice Breaker

In this next section, we focus on experiential exercises to help draw out values, and to relate them to career directions. Begin this section with the following ice breaker:

Invite participants to form a circle (standing). Introduce yourself by completing the following sentence: *My name is* _________, and *I value* _________. The person to your left is then asked to complete the same sentence, inserting their name and value. Once they have introduced themselves, they then must also introduce you. Each person around the circle must introduce themselves and the person on their right.

> Ex: *Hello, my name is Sareena, and I value humour.*
> *This is Lynne, and she values family.*

Each person only introduces the one person on their right (not everyone who has gone before them!)

Once the circle is completed, encourage participants to briefly reflect on the diversity of responses and how it felt (easy or difficult?) identifying a value for themselves?

2. Values Negotiation
(45 minutes)
Adapted from: *CareerWorld*

The following is a dynamic way to introduce values exploration.

Introduce the Values Negotiation exercise as follows:

- Distribute the Value Items handout. Invite each participant to read through the list. They will note that some items attract them; others may not. Have participants imagine that they could actually have the items that attract them. Encourage them to savour the feeling!
- Divide participants into groups of four.
- Each participant will bring to the group their own preferences/ wishes. Some may want the same items. There may be items that nobody wants. Their challenge will be to negotiate as a group in order to divide the items on the list between the 4 members. Groups may negotiate in whatever way they choose.

Avoid structuring groups too much. Emphasize that how they divide items is up to the group to decide. Groups may come up with some very creative options -- let it emerge and see what happens!

- Allow 20 minutes for groups to negotiate the distribution of the Value Items.

Large Group Discussion

When groups have completed the exercise, conduct a large group discussion. Highlight the range of strategies used by groups to negotiate the division of items. How did groups decide how to divide their lists? Encourage participants to reflect on their own negotiating style, noting that negotiation is an employability skill. Ask the group to brainstorm a list of other skills they used in this activity. Responses might include:

- communication;
- patience;
- decision-making;
- creativity;
- leadership.

Make the connection between the negotiation activity and values. Note that behind each item on the list lie values. Each person is unique, so that even though two people might have wanted the same item, they may have wanted it for different reasons (for example, winning a million-dollar lottery may represent wealth/financial security for one person. For another, however, it might be connected to the ability to donate to a struggling charity and, therefore, represent the value of service/giving). Ask participants to reflect on the items for which they fought the hardest. Have them reflect on the *reasons* for the choices they made. What was attractive and personally compelling about items chosen?

VALUES LIST

- Adventure
- Power
- Accomplishment
- Service others
- Status
- Recognition
- Freedom
- Financial/Reward
- Knowledge
- Using talent/skill
- Responsibility
- Moral conviction
- Justice
- Creativity
- Security

Draw their attention to the following list of work values. Note that the list is not exhaustive — they are simply a sampling of values to which they can add others:

On flip chart list Values

- Adventure
- Power
- Accomplishment
- Serving others
- Status
- Recognition
- Freedom
- Financial/reward
- Knowledge
- Using talent/skill
- Responsibility
- Moral conviction
- Justice
- Creativity
- Security

Invite participants to label the values their choices expressed. Ask them to note 4-5 values that came out strongly for them in this activity in their **Portfolio**.

Conduct a plenary discussion on how we express values in our lives — in the paid work we do, the unpaid work we do, the choices made or not made, our way of being. Note that values are not "value-laden" (ie: what is right for me is right for me -- but not necessarily for you.) We own our values and they are not for anyone else to judge. What is important is that we be aware of our own values and know that they are congruent with our own beliefs and life choices.

Alternative Activity:
Values Auction
(45 minutes)
Adapted from:
CareerWorld

As an alternative to the negotiation in groups of 4, you may wish to use the same value items to hold a live auction. In this application, each participant would be given $500 in fun cash (ex: Monopoly money). In large group, you would act as auctioneer, with each value item being put "on the block". Participants could then bid competitively for items -- the highest bidder "owning" the item. The auction would be complete when all the items had been "on the block" OR when all participants had spent their $500 limit. The debrief to the activity would remain as above, omitting the reflection on negotiation skills and styles.

VALUE

A value is a firmly help belief that may govern our most meaningful preferences and fundamental choices

3. Define Values

What is a value?

Use the following text as a guide for discussing values:

A value is firmly held belief that may govern our most meaningful preferences and fundamental choices.

- Values guide our behaviour and our actions but are often so naturally a part of who we are that they are outside our awareness.
- They express the themes which hold the most meaning and importance to us.
- Our values are not simple organizers; they are multiple and complex and they often compete with each other.

Values are powerful in our lives. To make the connection, invite participants to think about a recent event in their lives when their actions really felt "right" -- When they knew that they were doing something that was congruent (in-line) with their values.

You may want to give an example from your own experience.

Ex.: *If I value service to others and helping persons in need, then volunteering at the food bank is an activity that is congruent with my values.*

Ask participants to reflect on what they experience when this occurs? How does it feel?

Ask participants to think about if there has even been a time when their actions weren't congruent with their values.

Ex.: *I value equality and respect, yet found myself with a group of friends who excluded people based on appearance.*

Have participants reflect on how doing something that was incongruent with their values felt.

Note that being alert and sensitive to the values that are most important to you allows you to be much clearer about:

- what work will be meaningful to you;
- who you are willing to work with and for and who you will not work for; and
- what needs are most important to be met.

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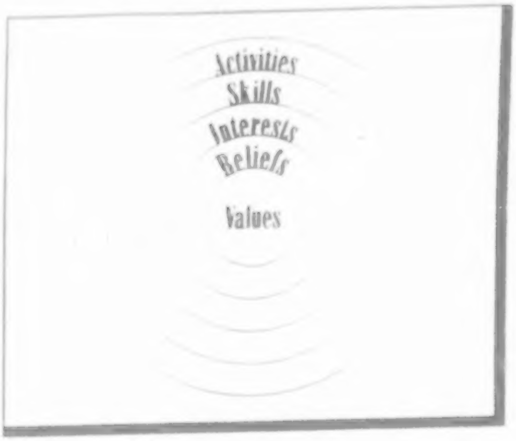

Activities
Skills
Interests
Beliefs
Values

It is important to note that values are not constant — they shift and grow with life experience. Relative to other aspects of in our personality, however, values tend to be the most stable, solid component. Often we need the opportunity to reflect on our values to see if they are helping or hindering in our lives. Frequently, unexamined values operate quite outside our awareness and hinder our growth.

4. The Onion

Use the following "Onion" to examine the role of values:

Note that values lie at the "core" -- meaning that while changeable, they are less readily amenable to change than our beliefs -- which are less readily amenable to change than our interests etc... We can easily pick up new activities and drop old ones. New skills can be developed and we can become "rusty" with old skills if we don't have occasion to practice them. Values, however, tend to stick with us. For this reason, it's important to draw them out from time to time, examine them, and make sure that they still fit with who we are and who we want to be.

We can all probably think of a time when our values influenced the activities we chose to undertake. Share an example and invite participants to add their own.

> Ex: *I got involved in volunteer work because I value service and community*

We less often acknowledge how our activities can end up influencing our beliefs and values. Illustrate with the following example (or one from your own experience):

> Ex: *I never valued competition. Further, I have never believed that I was any good at team sports. I had bad experiences in gym class -- I was always the last chosen for teams and I felt embarrassed about being out of shape. One day, a friend asked me to join her rowing team. She assured me that it was "just for fun" -- Since I value health and friendship, I agreed. As I practiced, I began to develop more and more skills as a rower. It was a great feeling to see the improvement and to be part of a team. I became more and more interested in rowing and in competition. I realized that I was beginning to see myself differently -- I no longer believed that I was*

Participant Directions for Small Group Work:
Where Have We Come From?

a. Discuss the messages/information you received in your youth about work from your parents, peers, teachers, guidance counsellors, books, libraries, etc.

b. Group members may have extremely different experiences. All points of view should be represented during the discussion.

c. Use the following categories to stimulate discussion:

men & work
family life & work
women & work
work ethic
work & education
the young worker
the older worker
trades vs. professions
management (the boss)
work structures (like part-time, casual, hourly vs. salary)

Try not to limit your discussion to these above categories only: feel free to explore any areas that relate.

d. Choose a recorder who will write all ideas on flip chart paper.

e. Choose a spokesperson who will summarize your small group findings with the larger group.

4. Each group records their findings and reports out to the larger group.

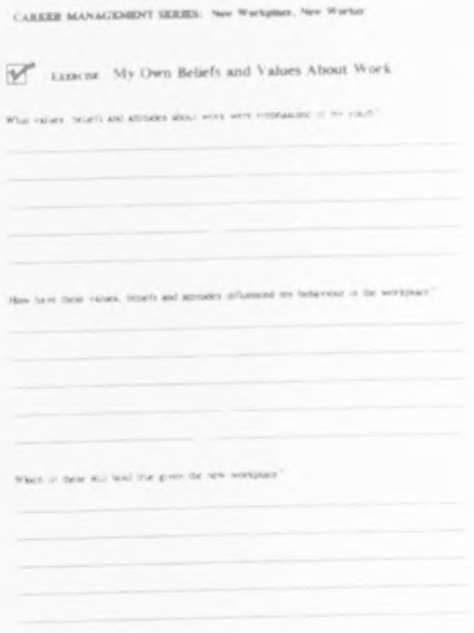
5. Using the flip chart findings as a basis for discussion, explore the following:

- similarities and differences between messages
- the messages and information that denote work values/beliefs
- how these may have affected actual behavior and choices in work-related activities
- the messages and information that are/are not applicable given today's world

Be sensitive to participants' emotional reactions, such as a sense of loss, perhaps, resulting from changes in work values. It is important to acknowledge and normalize the emotional and human impact of these workplace changes. Discussion about what is right or wrong, fair or unfair about changing values may sometimes ensue. Participants may need to be reminded that the workshop is designed to inform and prepare them to manoever in the changing workplace, not to debate the merits of social change.

6. In the workbook, have participants complete these three sections:
What values, beliefs and attitudes about work were emphasized in my youth?
How have these values, beliefs and attitudes influenced my behavior in the workplace?
Which of these still hold true given the new workplace?

7. Ask if there is any further discussion before moving on to the next exercise.



CAREER MANAGEMENT SERIES: New Workplace, New Worker

☑ Exercise: My Own Beliefs and Values About Work

What values, beliefs and attitudes about work were emphasized in my youth?

How have these values, beliefs and attitudes influenced my behaviour in the workplace?

Which of these still hold true given the new workplace?

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a "klutz" -- I started to believe that I could contribute to a team and excell in a sport. I began to associate team sports with health, friendship, excellence and achievement -- all things that I value. I had never valued team sports, because I had never associated them with these positive things before. In this way, adopting a new activity served to challenge old beliefs and reframe and broaden my values.

Discuss the following additional Points on Values:

- They are culturally and socially acquired.
- They are difficult to measure.
- They are changeable.
- They are key influencers of our goals.

5. **"Where Have We Come From" Activity**
(60 minutes)
Adapted from: *Career Management Series*

Encourage participants to keep their own list of values in mind as they take part in this next activity that explores where our values have come from.

- Divide participants into small groups (4-6 participants). Present the following themes:
  - men and work
  - family life and work
  - women and work
  - work ethic
  - work and education
  - the younger worker
  - the older worker
  - trades vs professions
  - management (the boss)
  - work structures (like part-time, casual, hourly vs salary)

  Note to facilitator: You may want to do this activity several times, focussing on one or two themes at a time.

Have small groups discuss the messages/information they received in their childhood/youth about work from their parents, peers, teachers, siblings, books, TV etc ... Encourage participants to use the themes to stimulate discussion. (They may move beyond the themes -- encourage broad exploration of messages related to work).

Be sure to emphasize that group members may have extremely different experiences. All points of view should be represented and respected during the discussion.

Have each group assign a recorder to write all their ideas on flip chart paper and a spokesperson who will summarize the flip chart for the larger group.

Allow 30 minutes in small group and approximately 5 minutes per group presentation. Using the flip chart presentations, explore the following in large group:

- similarities and differences between messages;
- the messages/information that influenced current values and beliefs about work;
- how these may have affected behavior and choices related to work and learning;
- the relevance of messages for today -- Which ones still "fit"? Which ones don't?

Be sensitive to participants' emotional reactions, such as a sense of loss, perhaps, resulting from changes in work values. It is important to acknowledge and normalize the emotion and human impact of confronting values and change. Reinforce that values are not "right" or "wrong" in and of themselves. Each person needs to define their own values based on what is right for them. Becoming aware of the messages you still carry and the values you hold related to work is the first step in becoming sure that your values are congruent with who you are and who you want to be.

6. **Portfolio Builder**

Direct participants to their **Portfolio Builder** to reflect further on their values, beliefs and interests and on how they relate to their career journey.

TOPIC: DEPENDABLE STRENGTHS

- Definition
- Reflective Activity
- Demonstration
- Triad Activity

YOU WILL NEED:

On flip chart or overhead:

- Definition Dependable Strengths

List of skills for references

PURPOSE:

1. To identify career-related strengths and skills by analyzing past accomplishments and how they were achieved.
2. To articulate these strengths and skills, so that they can be drawn on for interviews, résumés and self-marketing.
3. To "own" personal strengths and skills, acknowledging and taking pride in one's capacity to contribute to the labour market.

BACKGROUNDER: ADDITIONAL FACILITATOR RESOURCES

Strengths and Assets *(Constructivist Career Counselling - A Participant Guide)* Page 117

DEPENDABLE STRENGTHS

"Skills, talents, and other qualities that have been developed over one's lifetime, from childhood to the present, and which, when used in combinations, enable one to do certain thing well, with a sense of satisfaction and pride" (Forster, 1989).

1. **Introduction Strengths and Assets**

Introduce the importance of strengths identification, drawing from the following text:

We often have a lot of difficulty recognizing strengths that we have developed, even those held in high regard by others. Many of us are often better at recognizing our limitations and mistakes, while minimizing our assets. It is important to have opportunities to recognize assets and to learn to make these assets work best in career planning and career action. This section provides opportunities to identify strengths and skills and to label them so that we can present them to potential employers. Some skills are developed to perform a specific task. Having "technical" skills can be a real asset in the labour market. More and more, however, employers are recognizing the value of "transferable" skills -- skills that can be applied to performing many different tasks.

For example, it is very useful to know how to fix a car engine. With technology, however, techniques are changing rapidly. It is increasingly important to have the flexibility to learn new techniques and the adaptability to translate past knowledge into new applications. Flexibility and adaptability are examples of employability skills that are transferable across many occupations.

2. **Dependable Strengths**
   Adapted from: *Constructivist Career Counselling*

We all carry around "transferable" skills that we draw on to perform all kinds of activities. Often, they are so much a part of who we are that we take them for granted. These are our "dependable strengths".

Present the following definition of "dependable strengths":

Definition

"Skills, talents, and other qualities that have been developed over one's lifetime, from childhood to the present, and which, when used in combinations, enable one to do certain thing well, with a sense of satisfaction and pride" (Forster, 1989).

One of the most predictable interview questions, when being screened for employment or training, is "what strengths do you bring?" Many find this to be a really challenging question to answer. It is, therefore, important not just to be aware of your strengths and assets but to be able to describe them in ways which enhance career opportunities and promote yourself.

Note that the identification of strengths and assets is not achieved as a result of a single activity. It is recommended that a series of training opportunities be structured over time so that participants can:

- receive feedback from other participants concerning their strengths and assets;
- examine and reflect on their work experiences and what strengths and assets they are demonstrating and being rewarded for; and
- acquire the skills of receiving, and learning from, the feedback of others.

Note that this focus on strengths and assets does not preclude the necessity to recognize and work on limitations. Usually, however, there are abundant sources of information on weaknesses and far fewer on assets.

3. Dependable Strengths Reflective Activity
(45 minutes)

Use the following as your guide in introducing this activity:

We all use strengths and assets in our everyday activities — we just do not often recognize them as such. Standing back from our achievements and discovering how we accomplished them provides a window to see strengths and assets in action. If we can identify the strengths that enable us to carry out daily tasks successfully, we can begin to see which strengths we tend to draw on regularly. When these patterns become evident, this is a good indication of our strengths which are integrated and dependable.

This activity is one way to see the relationship between our accomplishments and our strengths/assets.

Ask participants to list three accomplishments they have experienced at some point in their lives. Explain that it is not the importance of the accomplishment that matters. Rather, encourage them to list any three things they:

- felt they did well;
- enjoyed doing;
- feel proud of.

Reinforce that it can be anything - big or small.

Ex. *I had friends over -- I had nothing in the fridge, yet I managed to put together a great meal.*

Last week at work I was asked to use a new machine. I didn't want to at first, but I got one of my co-workers to help me and it worked out fine.

Participants then list the steps used to complete each of the accomplishments. Have them examine the steps and think about what skills were necessary to perform the steps.

Using the Employabilities Skills Profile, invite them to find any matches between skills they used and those on the Profile. The idea is to see what patterns of skills emerge.

When they are finished, learners can look at the skills they have identified and consider how many of them are "familiar" — that is, are used in other areas of their lives or used on a regular basis but unnamed or called something different. These familiar skills are *dependable strengths.*

4. Dependable Strengths Demonstration

Before moving to the next activity (Dependable Strengths Triad Activity), it is important to demonstrate the process. The activity demands active listening skills and an exclusive focus on strengths. You will want to spend sufficient time modelling and practicing before moving to the activity.

Privately ask one participant if he/she would be willing to tell you about one of their accomplishments in front of the group. Reinforce that this is a voluntary activity, not a requirement. Set up the room so that your chair is facing the volunteer's chair, with the other participants formed in a semi-circle facing in. Instruct the group to listen to the volunteer's story. One-half of the participants (those facing the volunteer) are asked to write down any time they hear a strength or a skill in the story. Note: you may wish to list examples of skills on the flip chart for their reference.

Your role as facilitator will be to listen to the volunteer's story and to encourage specificity (as required) by asking open questions.

Ex: *How did you do that?*
Take me back and walk me through the steps involved?
Where did you begin? How did you get from here to there to actually achieving it?

The other half of the group (those facing you) are to write down anything you do or say that helps the volunteer tell their story.

After 10 minutes of storytelling, ask the half of the group that were listing the volunteer's strengths to share their lists. Record on flip chart all the skills identified by participants. You may wish to get a sense of which skills were identified by more than one person.

Note to facilitator: You will want to assess your group and structure this demonstration accordingly. If you have a diverse group, for example, you may wish to provide explicit instructions that each observer is to identify 3 skills so that skills lists are balanced. You may also wish to tie the stories more closely to work experiences. Use your knowledge of your participants and of group process in planning the demonstration.

Take time to check in with the volunteer. Do they recognize the skill set as their own? Reinforce that the list of skills is theirs to accept or reject -- They are in control. Note that this approach is a "skills bombardment" -- confronting him/her with the perceptions of others. This can be a useful way to identify skills that we ourselves might otherwise take for granted. Give the list to the volunteer to keep for their **Portfolio**.

Have the other half of the group share what they observed you say/do that helped the volunteer tell his/her story. Remind the group of the Rules of Feedback (Immediate, Specific, Descriptive, Positive). List on flip chart any concrete feedback. Push the group to be as specific as possible in their feedback.

Ex: *I found it really opened the conversation when you asked her to walk through each step.*

I appreciated it when you referred back to the earlier point in the story. You said "You were overwhelmed at first, but talking it over with a friend really helped to remind you that you weren't alone". That showed me that you were really listening.

The purpose of this feedback is to reinforce with the group the important role of listening in the upcoming dependable strengths activity. You have just modelled in front of the group the process of actively listening to a story in order to draw out dependable skills and strengths.

5. Dependable Strengths Triad Activity
(60 minutes)

The group will be invited to work in triads, each taking turns as the storyteller, the listener and as an observer. Each role is important:

The storyteller is asked simply to tell their story.

The listener is asked to try to help the storyteller to be as specific and detailed as possible, drawing out the positive aspects of the story. Your modelling was intended to reinforce building rapport, using open questions, eliciting specificity and detail and most importantly, remaining positive. The listener is not meant to judge the story in any way. Their job is to actively listen.

The observer is asked to be a time keeper (20 minutes per story) and to quietly record (legibly!) all the skills and strengths they hear in the storyteller's story. Their list is presented to the storyteller after the story is finished.

Just like in the modelling, the storyteller is ultimately in control. The list is theirs to accept or reject.

After the completion of one story the members of each triad will change roles. The triads will go through 3 full cycles, so that each group member will have the opportunity to try each role. (Total 60 minutes)

Alternative Applications

You'll want to encourage participants to tell stories many times over time. This way, skill patterns emerge. There are many different ways of accessing dependable strengths. This activity can be done as an individual reflective exercise, in pairs (the listener also plays the observer role), or in larger groups with multiple observers. Stories can be unstructured (ex: anything you did well, enjoyed and feel proud of) or structured (ex: identify one accomplishment over the last week at work) You may have an unlimited skill list, or ask for a specific number of skills (ex: list 3 skills that stand out in the story). Make this activity your own and make it fit the dynamics of your group.

Encourage participants to use their **Portfolio** as a place to record their skills development. Revisit skills and strengths regularly as you continue to move through the program.

TOPIC: MAPPING — A CAREER BUILDING METHOD

- Options
- Individual Mapping
- Sharing

YOU WILL NEED:

On flip chart or overhead:

- Sample of Map: Option 1
- Sample of Map: Option 2

PURPOSE:

1. To provide opportunities for learners to practice using the concept of mapping as a career development tool.
2. To provide opportunities for learners to experience and gain insight into the complexity of work-life issues.
3. To provide opportunities to use questioning methods which promote dialogue and exploration.

BACKGROUNDER: ADDITIONAL FACILITATOR RESOURCES

Mapping (*Constructivist Career Counselling - A Participant Guide*) Page 132

1. Introduction

Draw on the following to provide a context and introduction for mapping:

We have been exploring opportunities in the labour market and making connections to personal values, beliefs, interests, preferences and skills. Fundamental to our approach has been the understanding of career development as a process, as opposed to a one-time decision "event". We, in fact, BUILD our career over a lifetime. While some still remain in one job for life, most of our careers are more like winding journeys with many pathways and many decision points. By being aware of trends and the reality of labour market change, we can be proactive in identifying potential paths. By remaining aware of your own personal development, you can consider the degree to which potential opportunities are congruent with your own priorities, preferences and abilities. This way, you begin to take charge of your career development -- you become the "builders" as you construct your future directions.

Career Building Tool

The idea of career "building" is a powerful one. Each piece contributes to the building. The objective is not to finish the construction, but to keep "renovating" with new features and additions. A good visual image is the quite endless possibilities of Lego™.

Mapping is a method used extensively in many domains. It has been used in health care, education and the corporate world. It is a flexible tool that can be adapted to suit varying needs and applications.

Quite simply, mapping means drawing or creating a visual representation of something. In health care, patients have "mapped" their symptoms and pains. Seeing a visual representation has helped physicians to target treatments and work more collaboratively with patients. In business, corporations will often "map" their organizational goals, objectives and action plans. In so doing, sometimes new strategies and creative solutions emerge. In career development, mapping is a tool to record and organize information that is important in career exploration, decision-making and planning.

The use of "mapping" and of completing a career map demonstrates the "building" construct in practice.

What is mapping?
(On flip chart)

- It is an exploration tool; it applies well to career exploration.
- It is a way to organize personal information — for any number of purposes from preparing a résumé to keeping a personal journal.
- It is a way to begin to understand and link beliefs, values and assumptions to career issues. It is a way to clarify the roles of our beliefs, values and assumptions as our motivational motors — the "heart" of our career development.

2. Mapping Options

Note that there are many ways to "map" in career development. We'll present 2 options for consideration.

Note to facilitator: It is important to present options for mapping. Some participants may find one option represents a more meaningful or a safer alternative than the other. Allow participants freedom to choose according to their own preference and comfort level and/or to opt out. Having said this, mapping is not intended to be a therapeutic/counselling technique as it is presented here. Rather, it is intended as a tool to help organize and clarify personal information so that it may be more readily applied to career decision-making. Introduce mapping with this intent in mind.

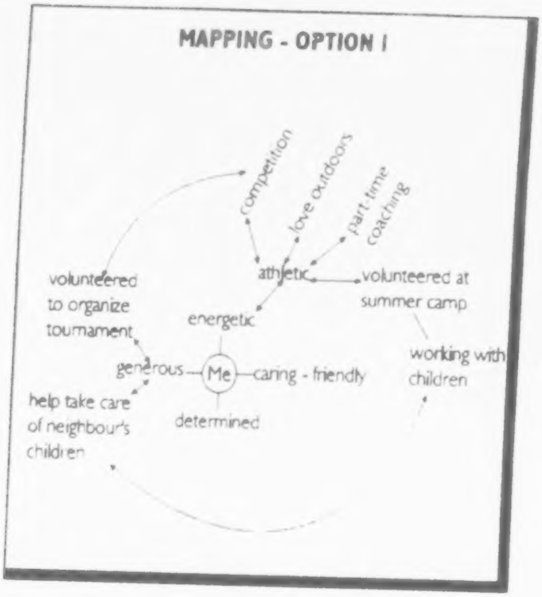
Mapping: Option 1
Personal Characteristics

From: *Constructivist Career Counselling: A Participant Guide*

Provide the following introduction for Option 1 to participants:

The first option is to visually represent 5-6 of your personal characteristics and to relate these to your career development. The steps involved in this option are as follows:

1. With paper and pencil, (you may wish to have coloured markers) sit quietly by yourself and imagine that a close friend is describing you to someone else. List 5-6 characteristics about yourself that he or she would use. (Note: Remember that this is a close personal friend who likes/loves you -- The characteristics for this activity are to be POSITIVE!).



MAPPING - OPTION I

competition
love outdoors
part-time coaching
athletic
volunteered at summer camp
volunteered to organize tournament
energetic
working with children
generous
Me
caring - friendly
help take care of neighbour's children
determined

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2. Draw yourself somewhere on a blank sheet of paper (you may wish to use flip chart paper). You can represent yourself however you'd like -- it might be your name, or simply a circle with "me" written in the centre. Choose anyone of your 5-6 characteristics -- Start with whichever one stands out to you the most. Draw the characteristic on the paper in whatever way makes sense to you. Connect it to the visual representation of yourself in whatever way fits. Continue drawing your characteristics.

3. As a final step, draw examples of how you would demonstrate each characteristic. For example, you might have chosen "athletic" to describe yourself. To elaborate on that aspect of yourself, you could add such descriptions as: "love being outside," "enjoy competition," "like to work with children through sports" "volunteered at summer camp", "work part-time as a coach",and so on.

Participants may begin to identify connections between their characteristics and the kind of work (paid/unpaid) they have undertaken and the experiences they have had.

Show an example of a map on the flip chart so the process is clear.

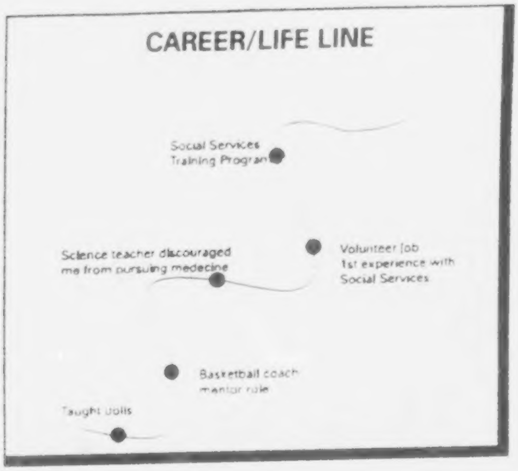
Emphasize to participants that how they draw is up to them. The purpose is not to excell artistically or to meet strick criteria. Each person's map is their own - it is an expression of them and their career development. The map is an individual's representation of how they perceive themselves at this time. It does not have to be neatly finished. Consider it to be a "work in progress."

Mapping: Option 2
Career/Life Line

Provide the following instructions for Option 2:

The second option is to visually represent your "career journey" to date. The steps involved in this option are as follows:

1. With paper and a pencil (you may wish to have coloured markers) sit quietly by yourself and think back to the first time you remember being connected to the labour market or to having a sense of "career". You may recall your first "job" or it may be a much earlier memory (ex. *I remember*


CAREER/LIFE LINE
Social Services Training Program
Science teacher discouraged me from pursuing medecine
Volunteer job 1st experience with Social Services
Basketball coach mentor role
Taught dolls

when I was very young that I used to line my dolls up in a row, stand at my little chalk board, and pretend that I was their teacher). Take that memory and try to represent it visually on your paper. Draw whatever stands out to you as your first connection to the world of work.

2. Continue to move forward in time, drawing any events that stand out to you as being connected to work/career. Sometimes people draw their Career/Life line like a pathway or highway, showing roads taken/not taken along the career journey. Others might draw a river, a tree, a wheel --- the possibilities are endless.

3. Make any connections between events on your Career/Life line. You may also wish to consider how events relate to your current career directions.

Just as in Option 1, how participants draw their map is up to them. It is their unique reflection on their career journey.

Allow participants the freedom to choose their preferred option. Note that participants may wish to use various materials to customize their map (ex. coloured markers, construction and/or flip chart paper). They may also wish to use cut-outs from magazines to make a collage instead of "drawing" their map. Encourage diversity and freedom.

3. **Individual Mapping**
(60 minutes)

Provide participants with approximately an hour to make their maps. Participants may choose to work in a private space and may need some time for reflection before they get started. Emphasize that maps are "works in progress". Participants can add to, adapt, and/or revise their map over time.

4. **Map Sharing**

Once participants have completed their maps (for now) invite anyone who is willing to hold up their map for the group to see. Note the diversity and creativity.

In mapping, one level of learning occurs from individually completing a map. Often, the act of organizing and visually representing personal information serves to clarify and prioritize personal values, preferences, interests, and skills. In producing the map, sometimes links between events and/or personal characteristics are highlighted and the "mapper" gains new insight into their career development.

A second (and important) level of learning occurs when a mapper shares their map with another person. Talking about your map -- walking another person through it -- often leads to new connections and deeper insight.

Invite participants to work in pairs. Allow them to choose a partner with whom they are comfortable sharing their map. Ask partners to take turns walking each other through their maps. Encourage mappers to set their own limits with respect to what they choose to share.

Coach pairs to actively listen to their partners as they share their maps. Encourage open questions that seek specificity and expand the dialogue. Note that the role of the listener is not to judge their partner's map in any way. Mappers should never be put in a position of having to defend their maps. Similarly, the role of the listener is not to analyze the map. It is fine to share an observation or ask about an interesting dimension of the map for the purpose of clarification. It is not fine, however, to delve into personal information and to push your interpretation of what you think your partner's map means.

Rather, the purpose of sharing is to provide an opportunity for mappers to fully describe their map. In so doing, new connections and insights often emerge.

5. **Large Group Debrief**

Return to the large group and share the learning that occured while completing and sharing the maps. When in pairs, what kinds of questions were facilitative? What connections/insights emerged? Encourage participants to record their reflections in their **Portfolio**.

Provide time for revising the initial map, either during the session or as a homework assignment. *The value of this technique is in the continued building process -- the reconstruction that occurs over time, as a result of sharing and reflecting on the initial map.*

6. **Mapping: Alternative Method**

An alternative to the 2 options presented earlier is to map the factors that are important in career decision-making.

In this way, a conceptual map can be used to elicit participants' most important concerns. The steps involved in this alternative option are as follows:

1. Write the word "work-life" on a piece of paper and then draw a circle around it. Imagine that you are about to explore a new career choice. On a separate sheet, list some of the aspects of work-life that you will want to consider before making a decision?

   Note that some may begin with location or money as the most important. Some may focus on work conditions, such as "challenging", "people-oriented" or "interesting". The essence of this approach is not to set priorities but to help participants elaborate the various aspects they consider to be important.

2. Draw lines from the work/life circle and visually represent the aspects on your list. Try to add specific descriptions and details. For example, if location is an important aspect of career exploration, the participant might expand on "location" by writing "don't want to live in isolation", "want to work outside and inside" and "would prefer not to live in a small town".

The map sharing and debrief remains as outlined above for Options 1 and 2.

Summary Points

The following key points should be reinforced:

- The most significant learning often comes from the dialogue with another in which the relationship between one concept and another concept is explored. This is a catalyst for achieving better clarity and making connections to personal career development.
- The map is a "work in progress". It moves from initial map to dialogue/discussion to revised maps as issues and relationships become clearer.
- The "work in progress" continues over the lifespan.

TOPIC: **CAREER-LIFE PROJECT**
- Activity
- Statements

YOU WILL NEED:

Career-Life Project Handout

PURPOSE:

1. To help participants define the many dimensions which are unique to them and important as they consider their career directions.
2. To provide a guided process to consolidate personal information into a statement of purpose/direction.
3. To build a bridge between opportunities in the labour market and opportunities for me.
4. To initiate a transition from exploration into decision-making and action.

BACKGROUNDER: ADDITIONAL FACILITATOR RESOURCES

N/A

1. Introduction

Draw on the following text to introduce the Career-Life Project:

"What do you want to be when you grow up?" was never an easy question. In today's labour market, which is neither stable nor predictable, it is an increasingly challenging question. For many it is not just challenging; it is paralyzing. Built into the question is an underlying assumption that both the direction and the destination ought to be clear. And yet in face of this assumption, we emphasize that change is constant and the journey (as opposed to the destination) is critical. It is pretty tough to be "clear", if what is meant by clear is highly goal directed, singular in purpose and absolutely certain about the outcome. It is reasonable (and important), however, to be clear if what is meant is developing a sense of direction and purpose while maintaining a good deal of flexibility, adaptability and openness to different routes to achievement. H.B. Gelatt, a career development writer and thinker suggests the following for consideration:

> *"We have always been told that if we don't know where we're going, we'll end up somewhere else. Well, the problem with that is if you always know where you're going, you'll never end up anywhere else!"*

Several perspectives are involved in developing a sense of direction and purpose. Few realize their life dreams only through the paid work they do. Rather, we find satisfaction in the combination of our multiple roles and varied activities. In today's labour market, it is important to define multiple routes to being useful and contributing within the context of a broad sense of direction. The following exercise provides a tool to begin to integrate exploration inward and exploration outward into a personal statement of purpose and direction.

2. Career-Life Project: Activity

(60 minutes)
Adapted from: *Career Transitions: Choices and Strategies*

The purpose of this activity is to give each participant a chance to bring their own unique order to the world of work.

Distribute the Career-Life Project handout to participants. Emphasize that this activity asks participants to respond spontaneously, following their heart and trusting the process. Tell participants that you will be guiding them through the various steps involved in this activity. Participants will be asked to follow your instructions, working individually through the process. Note that different people require different amounts

My Career Life Project

List of Occupations

Bus Driver
Make-up Artist
Accountant
Gestural Interpreter (Sign Language)
Data Processing Analyst
Real Estate Agent
Hairdresser, Barber
Secretary
Photographer
Economist
Computer Operator
Cleaner
Beautician
Interior Layout and Planning Assistant
Organizational Development Adviser
Window Cleaner
Fire Prevention Inspector
Sales Clerk
Receptionist
Industrial Design Technician
Waiter
Data Processing Clerk
Welfare and Compensation Officer
Electrical Engineer
Butcher
Information Analyst
Decorator
Employment Counsellor
Invoicing Clerk
Electrician
Door Attendant
Taxation Clerk
Car Driving Instructor
Fashion Designer
Geologist
Filing Clerk
Doctor
Dental Hygienist
Anaesthetist
Medical Archivist
Electronic Systems Inspector
Auto Mechanic
[illegible]

Researcher
Specialized Educator
Archivist
Psychologist
Computer Specialist
Sociologist
Claims Examiner
Car Salesperson
Human Resources Director
Insurance Clerk
Construction Inspector
Civil Engineering Technician
Dramatic Arts Teacher
Customs Officer
Social Worker
Group Leader
Financial Investments Analyst
Writer
Labour Market Analyst
Robotics Technician
Tutor
Immigration Officer
Nurses' Aide
Retirement Counsellor
Environment Designer
Travel Agent
Evaluator
Industrial Relations Counsellor
Artist, Painter
Nurse
Ambulance Driver
Director of a Leisure Establishment
Audio-visual Technician
Insurance Broker
Physical Education Teacher
Security Guard
Colour Counsellor
Cashier
Dental Technician
Systems Analyst
Postal Clerk
Hotel Manager
Training Course Instructor [illegible]

Audio-visual Material Technician
Tourist Information Officer
Surveying Technician
Retail Business Manger
Human Resources Clerk
Poet
Heavy Machine Operator
Primary School Teacher
Truck Driver
Officer in the Armed Forces
Missionary Doctor
Veterinary Surgeon
Singer
Editorial Writer
Comedian
Architect
Physicist
Lawyer
Notary
Tv Director
Geographer
Minister
Anthropologist
President of a Company
Scriptwriter
Carpenter
Physiotherapist
Ballerina
Naturalist
Purchaser
Taxi Cab Driver
Horticulturist
Masseur
Radiotherapy Technician
Emergency Ward Nurse
Palliative Care Nurse
Acupuncturist
Optician
Audio-prosthesis Technician
Interpreter
Police Officer
Banker
Firefighter
Sailor
Magician
Stagehand

Pump Attendant
Dentist
University Dean
Chemical Technician
Labour Relations Conciliator
Deputy
Quality Control Technician
General Director of Education
Marketing Director
Public Relations Specialist
Taxidermist
Coach
Farm Hand
Nursery School Teacher
Surgeon
Museum Director
Bookkeeper
Fine Art's Teacher
Library Technician
Homoeopath
Sculptor
Town Planner
Chaplain
Translator
High School Teacher
Ornithologist
Economist
Political Scientist
Jeweller
Inventor
Forestry Technician
Model
Speech Therapist
Hardware Sales Clerk
Camera Operator
Children's Book [illegible]
College or University [illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]

Grouping of occupations

Group	Reasons

My Career Life Project

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of time to complete the steps of the activity. Ask that participants be patient and respect each others need for time while moving together through the steps. As you provide instructions, you'll want to observe the pace of the group. Likely, some will complete steps much more quickly than others. Be sure that everyone is ready to move on before you proceed with directions to the next steps.

Provide the following instructions to participants:

1. Place a check mark beside any occupation which attracts you. Respond spontaneously. Don't worry about whether you have the training or the skills to do the occupation. Simply go by what attracts you and how you feel. You don't need to know why they attract you and you can check as many as you wish.

2. Group the occupations that attract you in any way that makes sense to you. Which ones seem to naturally go together from your perspective? Which ones would you like to go together?

3. Once grouped write down in the next column your reasons for each grouping of occupations. What does the group represent to you? What theme connects the occupations in group? There is no right or wrong answer. Each of you will have your own unique reasons for combinations.

Note to facilitator: Provide sufficient time for participants to reflect on their groupings. This is extremely important as they are giving their own meaning to the task and articulating their personal sense of direction.

4. Prioritize your reasons, ordering them according to the importance of the reason to you and to your career development. This can be challenging, but try to get a sense of the relative importance of each reason.

5. Try to capture in one or two sentences - one short paragraph maximum - the essence of what your reasons, when put together, express about your purpose with respect to work. Often organizations have "mission statements" that tell people the purpose or mandate of the organization. How would you put all your reasons together into a personal missions statement?

Large Group Sharing

In large group, invite participants to share their Career-Life project statement. Emphasize that sharing is not a requirement, but encourage any participants who are willing. It is usually a rich experience to hear the diversity and conviction in the statements. The statements are intended to highlight what is most important, at least for now. While everyone started with the same information and were given the same instructions, what emerges will likely be very unique statements of personal purpose.

Emphasize in the Career-Life projects:

- the range of talent and the range of ways individuals work with the same information;
- the potential for paid and unpaid work as vehicles for achieving one or more parts of a mission statement;
- the expanded options which exist to express this career-life project;
- the usefulness of repeating this exercise at intervals, always looking to the reasons for groupings and considering how work options "fit" with the mission statement. While we receive our satisfaction from many sources, work-life satisfaction will be influenced by the extent to which our paid work is in any way connected to our sense of purpose.

Note to facilitator: You may wish to spread this activity over several sessions, allowing time for personal reflection and integration. Encourage participants to record their statement in their **Portfolio** and to revisit it regularly as they move into decision-making and action.

Optional Extension
Adapted from:
Career Transitions: Choices and Strategies

An additional optional extension is a reflective activity with four critical statements for completion:

- an animal that describes me is ...
- one thing I do well is ...
- If I could only keep one thing, it would be ...
- If I could do anything, I would ...

Participants complete this individually. Participants then discuss their answers in small working groups. Provide the following as their guide:

- *"an animal that describes me is"* may shed light on personal qualities.
- *"one thing I do well..."* often describes skills, especially employability skills.
- *"The one thing I would keep ..."* provides a window to personal values.
- *"If I could do anything ..."* highlights preferred activities.

Note that these components are important pieces to consider in career decision-making. Encourage participants to compare and reflect on the learning and the insights in both of the activities.

TOPIC: MOVING TO DECISION-MAKING AND CAREER ACTION

- The Career-Building Plan
- The Challenges of Decision-Making
- The Funnel

YOU WILL NEED:

On flip chart or overhead:

- The Funnel

PURPOSE:

1. To introduce the importance of decision-making and to assist learners to use it as a developmental career building tool.
2. To consolidate learning as a foundation for decision-making and action.

BACKGROUNDER: ADDITIONAL FACILITATOR RESOURCES

"Positive Uncertainty" (Gelatt, 1989)	Page 137

1. Introduction

In this program, we have been moving developmentally through a career-building process. The key themes covered so far have been:

- Understanding Career Development;
- Opportunities in the Labour Market; and
- Opportunities for Me.

These are the building blocks for being prepared to move to decision-making and action.

This next section provides guidelines, resources and tools to support making career decisions and enacting career plans. The process presented endeavours to be congruent with the spirit and the content of the program so far. It emphasizes the importance of decision-making and provides structures to support concrete action. It reinforces that career plans need to be as specific and goal-oriented as possible. Steps to be undertaken should be clear and achievable. Each participant should develop a written plan.

At the same time, however, the process presented here also underscores the importance of flexibility and adaptability, acknowledges diversity in decision-making and reinforces the life-long career building process. The written plan is a starting point — not a stopping point: all plans can be changed.

The career plan should integrate the critical learning about the labour market and about self which has taken place. The career plan is an integral part of the journey, flowing naturally from the work done so far in the program. What is to be avoided is the tendency to arrive at this point and regress to such thinking as:

- I must have one goal and one goal only;
- I must know exactly what I want to do and it must meet all my expectations and needs for career satisfaction; and
- This is it! The decisions I make now are irreversible.

The difficulty with decision-making is that it can seem to reinforce these incorrect message precisely because it is a process of focusing and narrowing. Remember that acquiring direction, having plans and being goal-guided is not the same as having one direction, one plan and one goal.

The career plan is a vehicle for participants to move forward in their career journey.

2. **Career Decision-Making**

Large Group Discussion

Conduct a large-group discussion on decision-making. Note that we have probably all been told at one time or another to "Just make a decision!" — sometimes with encouragement and sometimes with exasperation. Encourage participants to share their own experiences and their perspectives on decision-making.

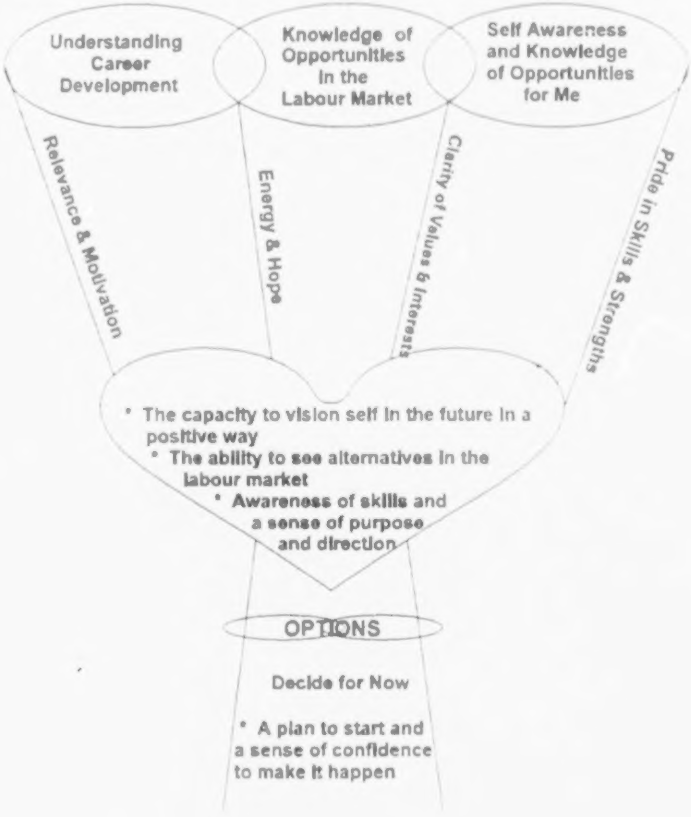
Ask participants to brainstorm what makes decision-making difficult? Responses might include the following:

- In deciding, we give up at least one other possibility;
- The outcome, regardless of how well we plan, is not predictable;
- There is usually no right or wrong decision;
- There is no single, tried and true method of making decisions;
- Most decisions involve a degree of risk;
- Depending on the impact of the decision on our lives, there can be different levels of anxiety;
- Self-doubt is a frequent companion of decision-making;
- There is often a lack of information. We do not feel connected to our decision because we are lacking "out-there" knowledge — research and relevant facts and "in-here" knowledge — our measuring stick and guide.

Career decision-making is often difficult because it does not occur as part of a building process. We often skip the critical building blocks and jump directly to decision-making. But it is really challenging to "Just make a decision!", when the purpose of deciding isn't clear, you haven't researched labour market opportunities and you haven't carefully considered what is most important to you. Career plans don't hold much weight unless they are based on a clear understanding of the "big picture" (what is career development and how does it relate to me?), knowledge of labour market opportunities, and a solid foundation of self-awareness. With these, decisions and career plans should not need to be forced — they can begin to naturally emerge.

3. The Funnel

The "Funnel" offers a visual illustration of how the building blocks of this program support decision-making and career action:


Understanding Career Development
Knowledge of Opportunities in the Labour Market
Self Awareness and Knowledge of Opportunities for Me
Relevance & Motivation
Energy & Hope
Clarity of Values & Interests
Pride in Skills & Strengths
* The capacity to vision self in the future in a positive way
* The ability to see alternatives in the labour market
* Awareness of skills and a sense of purpose and direction
OPTIONS
Decide for Now
* A plan to start and a sense of confidence to make it happen

MOVING TO DECISION-MAKING AND CAREER ACTION

The content of the program so far has been geared towards achieving the following Career Development Outcomes:

- The capacity to vision self in the future in a positive way;
- The ability to see alternatives in the labour market;
- The awareness of skills and a sense of purpose and direction.

With this foundation, it is possible to undertake relevant decision-making and move towards a meaningful and realistic action plan.

Decision making is inevitably a narrowing process, but it does not have to be restrictive and constrictive. When approached from a solid foundation, decision-making can facilitate consolidation as opposed to cutting off. The funnel provides one way to conceptualize decision-making: it is not a single static event; it is a continuation of the building process. The result is emergent decisions — decisions that are the natural outcome of this building process.

TOPIC: WHOLE-BRAINED DECISION-MAKING

- The Traditional Model
- Positive Uncertainty
- Creative Options

YOU WILL NEED:

On flip chart or overhead:

- Traditional Decision-Making Steps
- Positive Uncertainty
- Paradoxical Principles
- Decision Styles
- 6 Thinking Hats
- 6 Hats Activity Instructions
- Themes for Consolidation Map
- Consequence Matrix
- Critical Questions

Are You Ready for the Paradoxical Principles - Handout

PURPOSE:

1. To combine the traditional decision-making model with creative strategies
2. To introduce the concept of positive uncertainty and to present tools and strategies for adoption.
3. To practice a "Whole-Brained" approach to decision-making.

BACKGROUNDER: ADDITIONAL FACILITATOR RESOURCES

N/A

1. Introduction

Draw from the following text to set the context for decision-making:

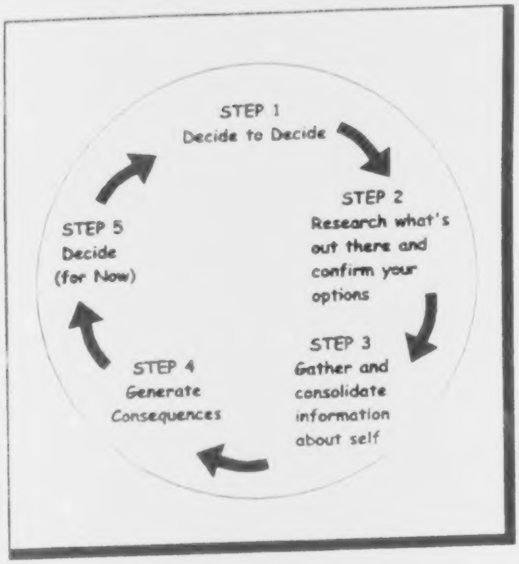
Traditionally, decision-making has tended to rely heavily on cognitive, linear and logical processes (ie. functions of the left brain). Most of us are familiar with linear models of decision-making that prescribe a structured set of steps to follow in order to formulate sound decisions. The intuitive and creative processes of the right brain have rarely been given credit in the decision making process. But most of us have made decisions based on our "intuition" or "gut feeling" or have experienced the alarm bells set off when decisions didn't feel right. Usually, we pay a steep price for ignoring those alarm bells.

This has led some creative thinkers in the field, such as H.B. Gelatt, to assert that our right brain does have an important role in decision-making process.

Adapted from:
Creative Decision-Making

Gelatt is a leading thinker in decision-making and career development. For many years, Gelatt wrote scholarly journal articles and academic texts expounding traditional, rational and logical approaches to decision-making. One day, well into his career, he published an article in a scholarly journal admitting that everything that he had written so far about decision-making was wrong -- at least, it was not complete. He suggested that while his traditional theories were valid, they weren't the whole picture. He realized that in his own experience, he didn't make decisions using only these approaches. Rather, some decisions were made instinctively, spontaneously, emotionally, and based on "gut" feelings. In reality, he concluded, we need to draw on both sides of our brains to make sound decisions.

A true story illustrates the point. A professor at UBC was faced with deciding where to spend his sabbatical year. He had been offered positions in the UK and Australia, each with its unique advantages and disadvantages. He and his family weighed the options carefully. They employed traditional strategies, listing the pros and cons and applying logic and rational analysis. They researched the options thoroughly, investigating schooling for the children, real estate, climate, cost-of living, -- every possible consideration. As the deadline for the decision approached, they consolidated their information and, together, agreed that all the indicators supported choosing the UK. The professor and his wife agreed that he would accept the position


STEP 1
Decide to Decide
STEP 2
Research what's out there and confirm your options
STEP 3
Gather and consolidate information about self
STEP 4
Generate Consequences
STEP 5
Decide (for Now)

in the UK the next morning. They went to bed and slept soundly. Upon awakening in the morning, the professor turned to his wife and said, *"We're going to Australia, aren't we?"* and she replied, *"Yes, we're going to Australia."* ...And, they went to Australia and had a wonderful sabbatical year.

The moral of the story is that all of the traditional logical and rational strategies that they employed were critical to their final decision. The research, the weighing of options, and the consideration of consequences are all important. In the end, however, they aren't always enough. Often, these combine with other factors (our feelings, "gut", instincts, emotions) to direct us towards a final decision that is "right" for us.

Drawing on the work of Gelatt and others, our intent will be to combine the best of the traditional model with the best of the creative approaches to decision-making.

In this way, the model we will draw from is a "whole brained" approach to decision-making. It doesn't throw out the traditional model. Rather, it suggests that it be used in partnership with creative/intuitive approaches. It is a blend of the left brain (logical/rational) and the right brain (intuitive/imaginative).

2. Traditional Decision-Making

Present the "traditional" decision-making model. Note that while there are variations, most include the following components:

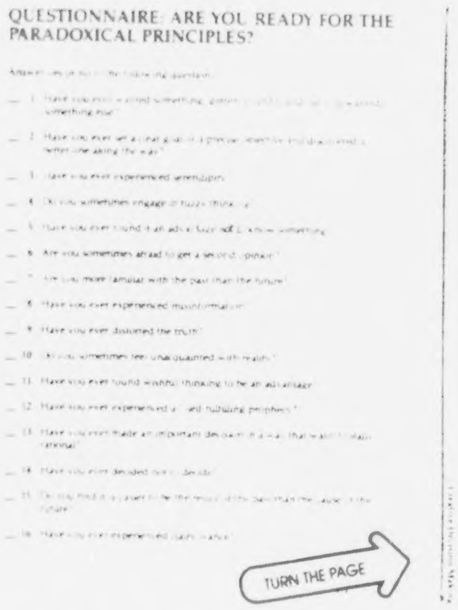
1. Decide to decide;
2. Research what's out there and confirm your options;
3. Gather and consolidate information about self;
4. Generate consequences;
5. Decide.

This is the basic traditional process which is probably familiar to most. Acknowledging its important role, we'll be using it as our base. To it, we'll add a range of creative, "right-brained" strategies to complement the traditional.

POSITIVE UNCERTAINTY:

Feeling uncertain about the future
and
Feeling positive about the uncertainty

- Be focused and flexible about what you want;
- Be aware and wary about what you know;
- Be objective and optimistic about what you believe;
- Be practical and magical about what you do.



QUESTIONNAIRE: ARE YOU READY FOR THE PARADOXICAL PRINCIPLES?

Answer yes or no to the following questions.

__ 1. Have you ever wanted something, gotten it, and then [illegible] wanted something else?

__ 2. Have you ever set a clear goal or a precise objective and discovered a better one along the way?

__ 3. Have you ever experienced serendipity?

__ 4. Do you sometimes engage in fuzzy thinking?

__ 5. Have you ever found it an advantage not to know something?

__ 6. Are you sometimes afraid to get a second opinion?

__ 7. Are you more familiar with the past than the future?

__ 8. Have you ever experienced misinformation?

__ 9. Have you ever distorted the truth?

__ 10. Do you sometimes feel unacquainted with reality?

__ 11. Have you ever found wishful thinking to be an advantage?

__ 12. Have you ever experienced a self-fulfilling prophecy?

__ 13. Have you ever made an important decision in a way that wasn't totally rational?

__ 14. Have you ever decided not to decide?

__ 15. Do you find it is easier to be the result of the past than the cause of the future?

__ 16. Have you ever experienced [illegible]?

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3. Positive Uncertainty

Adapted from: *Creative Decision Making*

Gelatt coined the paradoxical term *Positive Uncertainty:* Feeling uncertain about the future and feeling positive about the uncertainty.

Four paradoxical principles

Gelatt's work is based on the following principles:

- be focused and flexible about what you want;
- be aware and wary about what you know;
- be objective and optimistic about what you believe;
- be practical and magical about what you do.

Large Group Discussion

Facilitate a large group discussion, encouraging participants to compare their reactions to Positive Uncertainty and to the four principles.

Discuss these in the context of today's labour market.

How do the participants respond to the principles? How are they useful in today's labour market?

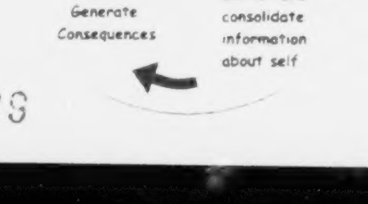
Questionnaire

Have participants complete the questionnaire: *"Are You Ready for the Paradoxical Principles?"* Discuss their answers and reactions.

4. The "Whole Brained" Decision-Making Process

The "whole brained" decision-making process follows the traditional model, while adding creative strategies so that participants can access both their creative and logical sides. We'll be taking each component and suggesting a more creative "right-brained" strategy. This way, we'll move our way around the decision-making process using both left and right brain approaches at each step.

(Have the traditional decision-making model displayed on a flip chart or overhead and superimpose the right brain strategies as you work through the "whole brained" process.)


STEP 1
Decide to Decide
STEP 2
Research what's out there and confirm your options
STEP 3
Gather and consolidate information about self
STEP 4
Generate Consequences
STEP 5
Decide (for Now)

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DECISION STYLES

- Rational — *"This is the most sensible";*
- Impulsive — *"Leap before you look";*
- Delaying — *"Cross that bridge later";*
- Intuitive — *"This feels right — not sure why";*
- Safe — *"Easy does it";*
- Pleasing — *"Do what other expect";*
- Fatalistic — *"It's in the cards".*

Step 1: Decide to Decide

Sometimes this initial step can be the most difficult of them all! Gelatt makes two key points:

Know your decision-making habits

- There is more than one way to make a decision.
- It can be helpful to develop a "repertoire" of decision-making strategies.

He suggests that by becoming aware of our own dominant decision-making habits, we can begin to more actively manage our decisions.

Reflective Activity

Ask participants to think of two decisions they have made recently. Suggest that they try to think of "lukewarm" decisions (ie. not too hot, such as marriage or divorce, but not too cold, such as what to wear today). Have participants think about how they made their decisions. What process did they follow? Have them write down the steps they took. Can they label their approach? Provide several minutes for personal reflection.

Present the following examples of decision-making styles:

- Rational — *"This is the most sensible"*;
- Impulsive — *"Leap before you look"*;
- Delaying — *"Cross that bridge later"*;
- Intuitive — *"This feels right — not sure why"*;
- Safe — *"Easy does it"*;
- Pleasing — *"Do what other expect"*;
- Fatalistic — *"It's in the cards"*.

Note that this is not a comprehensive list, but it does describe some common approaches. Ask participants if they recognize their own process on the list. Do they have any other styles to add to this list.

Develop a repertoire of decision-making strategies

Conduct a large group discussion on different styles. Do participants use different styles for different kinds of decisions? Are there many differences/similarities among group members? How difficult would it be to "try on" different approaches? Note that Gelatt encourages us to expand our repertoire, having a range of styles to draw on in our decision-making.

6 THINKING HATS

- Yellow Hat:
  hat of optimism
  What are the logical positive benefits?
- Black Hat:
  hat of caution
  What are the potential difficulties?
- Green Hat:
  hat of creativity
  What are possible new solutions and ideas?
- White Hat:
  hat of logic and reason
  What information is needed/available?
- Red Hat:
  hat of intuition and feelings
  What is your immediate "gut reaction"
- Blue Hat:
  hat of process control
  As you review all of the preceeding hats, what outcome results from the full process? What decision emerges?

De Bono's Six Thinking Hats
(Adapted From: *Lateral Thinking: Advanced Practical Thinking Training)*

Sometimes, building a repertoire is easier said than done. The work of Dr. Edward de Bono is useful in helping us to access alternative perspectives and to push ourselves out of "getting stuck" in one approach. Dr. de Bono has written extensively about creativity and decision-making. He coined the term "lateral thinking" and promotes strategies that help break restrictive habits and experiment with a repertoire of strategies. Introduce the following de Bono activity as a tool to "try on" different perspectives in decision-making.

In this exercise, participants will consider a decision from 6 different perspectives, each represented by a different coloured hat.

Note that no one hat is better than the next. By using each hat successively in decision-making, a fuller range of perspectives are incorporated and, according to de Bono, a more solid decision results.

Show the hats on flipchart. Walk through the hats, describing each and providing examples.

- Yellow Hat: hat of optimism
  What are the logical positive benefits?
- Black Hat: hat of caution
  What are the potential difficulties?
- Green Hat: hat of creativity
  What are possible new solutions and ideas?
- White Hat: hat of logic and reason
  What information is needed/available?
- Red Hat: hat of intuition and feelings
  What is your immediate "gut reaction"
- Blue Hat: hat of process control
  As you review all of the preceeding hats, what outcome results from the full process? What decision emerges?

You may wish to draw on the following example (or use one from your own experience) to illustrate the hats. Note that while we've included only three points under each hat, participants will not be restricted. Rather, when participants try this activity, they should be encouraged to generate as many points as possible for each hat.

Illustrative Example

Ex: Decision to be made: *Should I go back to University to finish my degree?*

Yellow Hat: What are the logical positive benefits of going back to school to finish my degree?

- I could be more "marketable" in the workforce.
- It could provide good opportunities for both professional and personal development.
- I know from past experience that I enjoy being in school full-time.

Black Hat: What are the potential difficulties of going back to University?

- I would lose my income if I quit my job to return to school.
- I might not like the program. It might no longer be relevant to today's labour market.
- My lifestyle might have changed so much that I can no longer adapt to the "student life".

Green Hat: What are some creative solutions/ideas?

- I could explore programs at a range of institutions (apprenticeships, institutes, colleges, other universities).
- I could check out options for part-time studies so that I could continue to work (and maintain an income).
- I could speak with other mature students about my lifestyle concerns and find out how they adapted.

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6 THINKING HATS ACTIVITY

- Choose an issue and "take a side"
- Follow the order of the hats
- Wear each hat for 2 minutes (except the red hat - 30 seconds)
- Appoint a time keeper
- Think expansively and creatively

White Hat: What information is available/needed?

- Information about a range of programs and schedule options. What are the requirements? Do I have the necessary prerequisites?
- Information about possibilities at my current work (Could I work part-time to accommodate part-time studies?
- Information on my own budget needs - What are my expenses? What can I afford to do? Are there sources of financial support?

Red Hat: What is my "gut" reaction?

- I'm not ready to go back to school.

Blue Hat: What emerges as an outcome of this full process?

- I realize that I have some research to do before I'm ready to make a decision. I need to spend more time under the white hat, clarifying my list of questions and researching my options.

Group Activity

For this activity, you will be having small groups use the six hats to work through a decision. For the first time, you may wish to provide a decision topic. For example, you may have groups consider a neutral topic, such as "Working from home" or "Starting our own business". You may also use a real decision currently faced by the group. Note that doing this activity in group illustrates the power of parallel thinking (ie. When everyone considers a decision from the same perspective at the same time). This process helps people move away from a narrow perspective and can often avoid conflicts due to differences of opinion.

Divide participants into groups of four to six. Provide the subject, (ex. "working from home") or provide enough time for each small group to choose their own subject. In their groups, participants will consider their subject by wearing each hat. All participants will wear the same hat at the same time. As a group, they will discuss the issue. Allow approximately 15 minutes for the whole activity -- two minutes of discussion under each hat (except for the red hat, which requires only 30 seconds since participants are to give only their spontaneous "gut" reactions). Have participants wear the hats sequentially in the order outlined above.

Take up discussion

Facilitate a large group discussion following the activity. How easy/difficult was it to change hats? Were some hats more natural/easier to wear than others? What was it like to work as a group together this way?

Note the amount of output possible in a short time when a group is thinking in parallel. Make the point that the "Western" style of meeting tends to be characterized by adversarial thinking — with each member trying to defend his or her point of view by challenging others. Parallel thinking has members working collaboratively toward a common goal of success.

Is this a process that appeals to participants as a way to tackle future group decisions?

Link to Individual Career Decision-Making

Note that de Bono's hats can also be applied to individual career decision-making. As participants begin to formulate possibilities for their next career steps, they can consider their options using the 6 de Bono hats. In this way, they'll be drawing on a full range of perspectives and using a "repertoire" of styles in their planning. In conclusion, underscore the importance of:

- getting in touch with your own decision-making habits;
- realizing that there is more than one way to make a decision; and
- developing a repertoire of decision-making approaches.

Step 2: Research What's Out There and Confirm your Options

The "Opportunities in the Labour Market" section of this program was focussed on researching what's out there in the labour market. Having done (or at least started) this, step 2 in the decision-making process is to consolidate that research and to weigh your options. In addition to all of the "out there" research (eg. occupational forecasts, labour market trends, information interviewing), Gelatt suggest that we also check out our options with "in here" research. "In here" information can be accessed by the mind's eye. Gelatt maintains that our mind doesn't know the difference between something that really happens and something that is vividly imagined. Therefore, he suggest that a great way to safely "check out" options is to imagine, or vision the options. In your mind's eye, you can "try on" possibilities, thereby accessing a creative way to weigh different options.

Reflective Activity

Invite participants on a "guided fantasy" as a way of checking out an option they may be considering. Have them write down one possibility that they are considering as their next career step (it may be going to school, getting a job in a particular field or starting their own business — it is for them to define.) Note that for some, their possibility might already be a very clear goal, while for others it might still be vague. Regardless, encourage participants to articulate their possible goal as concretely and specifically as possible. Reinforce that they are not committing to anything yet — this is just a chance to check out a possibility.

The following "guided fantasy" script provides a sample which you may want to draw from. Be sure to move through the guided fantasy slowly enough for participants to reflect and thoroughly experience the visioning:

Guided Fantasy Script

> Get comfortable and try to clear your mind of any thoughts, concerns or worries. Close your eyes if you're comfortable doing so. Take a deep breath and relax. Think about the goal that you just wrote down — your possible next career step. Think about that goal as vividly and concretely as you can — Imagine that the goal is right in front of your eyes. Make sure you can see it. It's something that you want.
>
> Now leave today, and go to that time in the future when you have achieved your goal. You have completed all of the work to make it happen. You have made the decision to go for your goal, and you have made it a reality. You are there. You have made the transition and you are living your goal. Take yourself forward to that time. Imagine yourself there.
>
> You may look a little different now. Look around you.
>
> - Where are you?
> - What are your surrounding like — do you like them?
> - What are you doing?

- Who is there with you?
- How do you feel in your skin?
- Are there any surprises? Is this what you expected?
- Are you pleased? Do you feel satisfied?

Take a good look around — soak it in. Now, gradually move away. Move back in time, back to today, back to yourself and open you eyes when you're ready.

Debrief

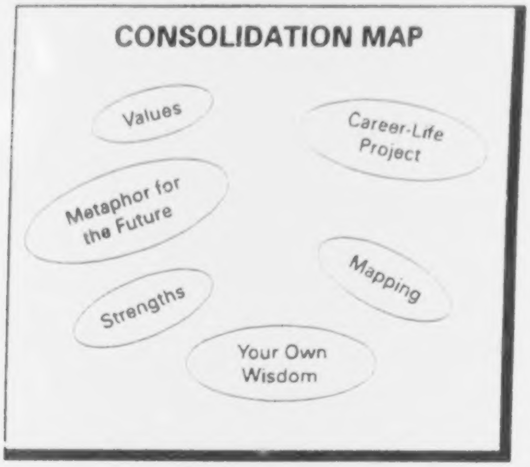
Take a few minutes to process this with the participants. Ask them how it felt. Were there any surprises? Allow time for participants to discuss and/or quietly reflect on the experience. Encourage them to record their reactions and any learnings in their **Portfolio**.

Reinforce that imaging the future provides a safe and powerful way to check out possibilities. Also note that this technique can be used to motivate action (as with professional athletes that imagine themselves winning as part of their preparation before competition). Encourage participants to check out their possibilities by doing this for each option they are considering.

Step 3: Gather and consolidate information about self

The third step involves checking out options within the context of personal information. In the "Opportunities for Me" section of this program, we presented a range of strategies to gather information about self (eg. values, dependable strengths, mapping, career-life project). Invite participants to reflect on this part of the course. Ask them to think about the information they have gathered about themselves that has been accessed by various activities they have engaged in so far.

At this stage, participants will want to consolidate this information, "boiling it down" and drawing out the priority information that is essential to their career decision-making. There are many possible ways to do this. Participants may wish to simply review their **Portfolio** and to record the key personal information that has been gleaned (ex. List most critical values, key strengths, motivators, directions).



CONSOLIDATION MAP

Values
Career-Life Project
Metaphor for the Future
Mapping
Strengths
Your Own Wisdom

Consolidating Map

Another way to consolidate personal information is to "map" it. In the same way that participants mapped their career/life lines and/or their personal characteristics, they can now create a "mega-map", incorporating the full range of personal information gathered. As in their previous maps, how they choose to visually represent their information is up to them. They should be encouraged to "let it emerge". You may wish to review the following key themes covered in the "Opportunities for Me" section as preparation for the consolidation map:

- Metaphors for the Future
- Values
- Dependable Strengths
- Mapping (Career/Life Line and/or Personal Characteristics)
- Career Life Project

They will also, of course, be adding to this their own wisdom and self-knowledge.

Provide sufficient time (approximately 90 minutes), quiet space, and materials (Flipchart paper, markers, scissors, magazines for collages). Encourage participant to take time for reflection and to work independently on their consolidation.

Once participants have completed their consolidation (it may be a series of lists, a map or some other visual representation) have them rejoin as a large group. Have participants place the page with their consolidation in front of them. Have them revisit the possible next career step (ie. the goal that they worked with under Step 2).

Consolidating Maps as Context for Goals

The purpose of this consolidation is to create a context for assessing the appropriateness of possible goals. Ask participants to write their goal on a small piece of paper . (If a participant is working with several goals, have them choose one to work with now. They can repeat this activity with their other options later.) Have participants actually place their piece of paper with their goal statement in the centre of their consolidation page. In this way, their goal should be surrounded by either lists or visual representations of critical personal information.

CONSEQUENCE MATRIX

	Short Term	Long Term
Self		
Others		

Challenge participants to assess the degree to which their goal is congruent with and supported by who they are and what is most important to them:

- Does their goal match their vision of their future?
- Is their goal congruent with their values?
- Does the goal draw on their strengths?
- Is it supported by their interests and preferences?
- Is their goal congruent with their sense of personal mission/their "big picture" career direction?

Provide sufficient time for personal reflection. As an option, you may wish to invite participants to discuss their reactions/insights in pairs.

Return to the large group and facilitate a discussion on the activity, participants' reactions and their insights. Highlight the importance of "checking out" possible goals in the context of personal information. Note that while our paid work may not fulfill all of our personal needs, we are more likely to succeed in our work if it is congruent with and supported by who we are and what is most important to us.

Step 4: Generate Consequences

Most of us are familiar with the importance of weighing out the pros and cons of our decisions. Many have been taught to list all of the positive and negative aspects of a scenario as a strategy to guide decision-making. We often neglect, however, to think about how our decision will affect us in both the long and the short terms. We also often neglect to consider how our decisions might affect other people in our life.

Consequence Matrix

To help with this process, introduce participants to the following Consequence Matrix:

	Short Term	Long Term
Self		
Others		

This is a simple tool which helps to organize information in a clear and comprehensive framework. Walk through each quadrant of the matrix:

- The top left-hand quadrant is for the short-term consequences to you. If you were to achieve your goal, how would it affect you in the short-term?
- The top right-hand quadrant is for the long-term consequences to you. If you were to achieve your goal, how do you anticipate it affecting you in the longer term?

Note that there are no set definitions for short-term and long-term. You may wish to facilitate a large group discussion to clarify what will be meant by these terms for the purposes of this activity. Participants may have different definitions. It is not important that the whole group agree to one definition. Rather, what is important is that a clear definition is established for each participant before they complete the activity.

- The bottom left-hand quadrant is for the short-term consequences to others. Think about who in your life might be affected if you were to achieve your goal. In this quadrant, you would list both who would be affected and how they would be affected in the short-term. (Use the same definition of short-term and long-term as you did for the top two quadrants).
- The final quadrant is for the longer-term consequences to others. Once again, you would list both the who (which may or may not be the same as in the short-term quadrant) and the how.

Illustrative Example

You may wish to provide an illustrative example to further clarify the Matrix. You may use an example from your own experience or draw from the following:

Goal: To work overseas with an international agency doing community development for two years.

	Short-Term	Long-Term
Self	• miss my family and friends; • experience a new culture and excitement of travel; • benefit from new experiences (both professional and personal); • postpone finishing my education.	• develop new skills (both life/adaption skills and professional skills); • make new contacts/ develop new networks; • could lead to more work in international development; • might miss home.
Others	• my boyfriend will be separated from me; • my family may be asked to provide me with some financial help; • the agency where I volunteer will need to find a replacement; • my dog will need to find a temporary new home.	• relationship with boyfriend might not survive (but he could join me there if it did); • I won't be close at hand if grandmother becomes ill and needs me; • It might be hard to maintain long-distance friendships; • I won't likely be available to pursue the possibility of starting a small business with my best friend.

Individual Activity
(40 minutes)

Have participants use the same "next step" career goal that they have used for the previous 2 steps. Ask them to have their written goal (one at a time if they have more than one that they are considering) in front of them.

Ask participants to complete the Matrix for their goal. What are the short-term consequences to themselves? What are the longer-term consequences to themselves? What about the short and long-term consequences for others?

Provide sufficient time (approximately 40 minutes) for participants to individually complete Consequence Matrices for their goal(s). Facilitate a large group discussion to share reactions and insights.

Alternative Activity: Whole-Brained Dialogue

Another way for participants to examine the consequences/implications of their decisions is to access both sides of their brain and to actually have them "talk" to each other. We've already referred to the different perspectives of the right and left brains. The functioning of the brain is beyond our scope here, so we are clearly simplifying reality for our purposes. There has been evidence, however, that the right hemisphere of our brain is responsible for much of our creativity, emotionality and instinct. The left hemisphere, conversely, is seen primarily as the logical, rational, computing side.

Some research indicates that people may have a "dominant" hemisphere. As a result, some people (those with a dominant left brain) may be more likely to consider only the rational/logical consequences of a decision. Conversely, others (those with a dominant right brain) might be more inclined to consider their intuition and creative possibilities. Gelatt would suggest that both sides have critical contributions to make. We all have both right and left hemispheres. This next activity gets the two hemispheres talking with each other.

Model (Demonstrating this to participants before hand is recommended)

Set up two chairs, facing each other, at the front of the group. Designate one chair as the left brain (logical side of you) and the other as the right brain (magical side of you). Work through a sample decision by addressing the consequences/benefits associated with each side of the brain when seated in the respective chairs. In simple terms, when seated in the "right brain chair" express how you feel about the decision; When seated in the "left brain chair", express what you think about the decision. There is no set order -- just move back and forth between the chairs as thoughts and feelings emerge. A debate may develop between the two sides of you as you express out loud how you feel and think. This information is seldom articulated out loud and this exercise allows you to hear the different perspectives and concerns that each part of you brings to the decision.

This process provides participants an opportunity to begin to bring together what their heart and their head is saying and work toward integrating the two.

Dialogue Activity

Provide participants with an opportunity to try a right-left brain dialogue. They may work in pairs or triads, using 2 chairs and taking turns (with the other partner(s) observing). Participants may prefer to conduct the dialogue privately, with or without chairs. They may wish to write the dialogue, with left and right brain columns. While participants are free to choose the strategy that best suits them, you may wish to underscore the power of actually speaking the dialogue aloud and actually moving between the chairs. For whatever reason, the experience assumes a different dimension when done actively and orally. Try to create a safe and comfortable environment that supports participants to try it!

Step 5: Decide for Now

This final step is the time for narrowing options, and moving to the decision (at least for now!). All of the previous steps have been intended to prepare for this narrowing and focusing. Information from the previous sections of the course has been "boiled down" and used as a context within which to "check out" possibilities and options. Based on this assessment, some options may have been rejected while others may have been affirmed. Now is the time to choose a #1 option and to pursue it to action. It is particularly important at this stage to reinforce that a decision does NOT mean a commitment forever. Nor does it mean that you can never change your mind and go back to other options. It simply means committing your energies to the best match for you, for now. The **Portfolio** offers support for participants as they work towards developing their individual goal and action plan. The following provides a structure for a final check to ensure that all the critical factors have been considered in the decision before moving to action.

Critical Questions

A series of questions is presented which bring together the decision making process. If participants are able to answer all of the following questions, they should be ready and equipped to create an action plan. These questions can be used as an outline for a one-on-one interview with you, giving participants the opportunity to practice their interview skills. As an alternative, participants may be trained to interview each other.

Note that this process is not be done in the last hours of your work together. Rather, sufficient time (ideally several weeks) should be reserved so that you can make adjustments and revisit it.

CRITICAL QUESTIONS

1. What decision have made (at least for now)?

2. What information supports your decision-out there? in-here?

3. What factors have you considered? Where does your decision fit with your big picture? Is it congruent and supported by who you are and what is important to you?

4. What are the personal consequences of your decision? How will it impact others?

5. What is your practical self saying (left brain)? What is your magical self saying (right brain)?

6. What is your goal and first steps - be specific.

Introduce the participants to the following questions and allow them time to process and answer each one for themselves. You may wish to set aside time for individual reflection and to record answers in their **Portfolio**.

1. What decision have made (at least for now)?
2. What information supports your decision-out there? in-here?
3. What factors have you considered? Where does your decision fit with your big picture? Is it congruent and supported by who you are and what is important to you?
4. What are the personal consequences of your decision? How will it impact others?
5. What is your practical self saying (left brain)? What is your magical self saying (right brain)?
6. What is your goal and first steps - be specific.

5. Conclusion

The next section will be focussed on articulating the goal in such a way that participants can move forward to action. A vague, unclear goal can sometimes do more harm than good. Important final steps before action include conducting a "Goal Test" and considering contingencies.

Complete this section by reinforcing that we have tried to promote a "whole brained" decision-making approach. We've used a traditional decision-making model as a base, but superimposed on top of it a range of creative strategies.

The traditional decision model suggests a safe, predictable environment. Decision-making is a chaotic science, however. It is rarely as sequential, systematic or scientific as the model suggests. Career decisions today are taken in an environment of change, ambiguity and uncertainty. Therefore, we've tried to create a "whole-brained" model that is holistic and comprehensive in its approach.

Decision-making skills for the future include imagination, creativity and flexibility. However, even the most creative people need to resort to planning and need support to move to action. Both models are useful: no one method is the solution.

The approach suggested here has guided participants in a narrowing process. Rather than eliminate important information about the labour market and about self, it has endeavoured to consolidate and incorporate the consolidation into narrowing, focussing and deciding.

You may wish to close with a few quotes from H.B. Gelatt:

> *"If you give everyone a hammer, everything will become a nail."*
>
> *"One must invent the future or let someone else invent it.*
>
> *"Take a wild goose chase every now and again... That's what wild geese are for!"*

TOPIC: GOAL TEST AND CONTINGENCIES

- Goal Test
- Contingency Planning
- Barrier Brainstorm
- Support and Accountability

YOU WILL NEED:

On flip chart or overhead:

- Goal Test

PURPOSE:

1. To introduce goal testing as a process for participants to use in articulating their goals.
2. To work with an approach to identify barriers to action and to develop pathways to circumvent barriers.
3. To emphasize the importance of building in supports for success.

BACKGROUNDER: ADDITIONAL FACILITATOR RESOURCES

N/A

GOAL TEST

Is your goal:

- *conceivable?* — Can it be put into words that are understandable to others?
- *believable?* — Does the goal-setter believe in the goal?
- *achievable?* — Can it be accomplished?
- *desirable?* — Does the goal-setter want and value the goal?
- *measurable?* — Is it time bound with clear outcomes and dates for achievements?

1. Introduction

Regardless of the goal, building strong supports and structures for action will often make the difference between forward momentum and inactivity. One of the keys to goal attainment lies in how the goal is stated. Clearly articulating the goal, breaking it down into measurable steps and committing to time lines can make an enormous difference in follow-through.

To illustrate, use the example of the often dreaded task of cleaning your basement. When someone is faced with cleaning a cluttered basement, it is usually more appealing and productive to begin this monumental task by priorizing one area, outlining tasks and focusing efforts. This way, a section can be achieved in a few hours. Otherwise, an entire weekend can be spent trying to clean the whole basement with no apparent results — other than feeling overwhelmed and frustrated. In the same way, career goals need to be stated clearly so that efforts can be priorized and focussed. Goals are incomplete without clear action steps and a time frame with dates for completion. Successful career plans start with a well-stated goal.

2. Goal Test

Introduce the "goal test" as a tool to help participants to articulate their goals in ways that support success.

Illustrative Example

You may wish to draw on the following illustrative example to demonstrate the process:

Ex: Initial goal: to get a job as a mechanic

To complete the "Goal Test" ask whether the goal is:

- *Conceivable?* — It is understandable as stated. (Yes)
- *Believable?* — For our purposes here, let's assume that the goal-setter believes it, could achieve it, (ie. has all the necessary training and/or experience to enter at desired level and does want it).
- *Achievable?* — " "
- *Desirable?* — " "
- *Measurable?* — This is where the challenge usually lies.

Brainstorm with the group how the goal could be restated to make it more measurable. Examples of responses might include:

- Specify company (or companies) where want to focus efforts
- Specify timelines
- Specify position (title/tasks)
- Specify location
- Specify conditions (ex. full-time, minimum pay requirements etc...)

Revised Goal: to get a full-time position at the Esso, PetroCan or Carter's Garage in Perth as a mechanic's aide by September 1999.

From the revised goal, it is now possible to priorize and clearly outline the action steps required for achievement. Often, when a goal is articulated through the goal test, new research requirements become obvious. In the above example, it might be necessary to investigate specific contact information for the three garages, determine turnover and clarify specific position requirements/conditions.

You may wish to demonstrate the process for goal testing with a real goal. To do this, ask for one participant who is willing to share their goal with the large group. Have the volunteer state their goal. Write the goal on flipchart, and put it through the following goal test.

Is the goal:

- *conceivable?* — Can it be put into words that are understandable to others?
- *believable?* — Does the goal-setter believe in the goal?
- *achievable?* — Can it be accomplished?
- *desirable?* — Does the goal-setter want and value the goal?
- *measurable?* — Is it time bound with clear outcomes and dates for achievements?

As a large group, work with the goal until it "passes the test".

Individual Goal Testing

Have participants complete the goal test on their own career goal(s). This may be done as an individual reflective activity, in pairs, or in small groups. Support participants to revise their goals as necessary and to outline the concrete steps of their action plans.

3. Contingency Planning

As participants move to action, it is critical that adequate supports be in place. In decision-making, there is a tendency to focus considerable energy on goals and action plans. In this program, participants have been engaged in a "career building" process. All of their labour market research and exploration inward, their skills development and reflective learning has focused on leading them towards an "emergent" career decision. If the process has had integrity, then participants will likely feel strongly vested in their goal.

So what happens when they hit the first road black along the way? It can be devastating. The sense can be that if they did "everything right" and it STILL failed, then why bother? The first reaction may be to become very discouraged and to throw away the goal.

But usually a barrier doesn't need to be a wall. Usually, barriers can be overcome and (perhaps with a few adaptations) the goal can still be pursued. Almost as important as coming up with goals, is having a "plan B" to fall back on when a goal falls short. Introduce participants to contingency planning: a process to prepare for the barriers they may encounter in achieving their goal.

4. Barrier Brainstorm Activity

Choose a goal to work with for the purpose of demonstration. Ideally, a participant would volunteer their goal. If not, you may choose to use the sample revised goal from the above goal test activity or a goal from your own experience. In the large group, brainstorm the following:

External Barriers

- What might get in the way? List on flipchart approximately eight external barriers (ie. factors that are beyond the control of the goal setter) . You may wish to use 2 flip chart sheets, with four barriers recorded on each.

Internal Barriers

- What might stop the goal setter from achieving the goal? List on flipchart approximately eight internal barriers (ie. factors that are within the control of the goal setter).

Solution Brainstorm

Divide the group into four small groups. Divide the flipcharts sheet among the groups, providing each group with a list of four barriers. Give groups 30 minutes to brainstorm all of the possible ways that their barriers could overcome. If you are working with the goal of a volunteer, note that for the purpose of this activity the barriers and solutions may not be real to that participant. For this demonstration, the specific content and its relevance to the volunteer is not as important as understanding the process and realizing that barriers can be overcome.

Invite groups to present their solutions to the large group and post their flipcharts.

Debrief Discussion

Facilitate a large group discussion. Encourage participants to share their reactions and learning. Highlight that even if the specific barriers that were brainstormed never occur, the important learning is that a process does exist to overcome barriers (even unforeseen ones). Completing this activity for their own goals acts as insurance, planning proactively for as many "what ifs" as possible. It also serves as reinforcement that if the unforeseen does occur, it doesn't necessary mean the end of the goal. There are ways to overcome many of life's curve balls! Therefore, the best laid plans include the "what ifs".

Note that as in the decision process, the action plan is not singular or irreversible. It may take several weeks, and many drafts, for participants to have completed an action plan which they sign, share, are confident about and feel positive about initiating.

5. Build in Support and Accountability

Implementing career plans in today's labour market is challenging. Having alternative back up plans and anticipating with contingencies helps to remain directed and optimistic.

We all need encouragement and support (a cheering section) as we work toward goals and complete action steps. Support for achieving small steps and assistance in finding other sources of support outside any program will help reinforce the momentum toward goal achievement.

Formalizing the plan can also often help. Making a public commitment (to you, to other participants, peers, family and/or other supports) not only builds accountability but also increases the support network's ability to provide assistance and encouragement. Sharing goals and the current action steps planned can often enable participants to stay focussed and feel supported.

Once again, reinforce the difference between actively pursuing a career direction for now and committing to one option for life. The intent here is the former. Making a commitment for now enables participants to move forward but does not preclude changing their mind or changing direction over time.

Build in reward

Finally, as human beings, we all benefit from reinforcement and reward along the way. The WIIFM (What's In It For Me?) principle asserts that without ongoing rewards, people are at risk of losing motivation. Rewards are, however, unique to the individual. Because one person's reward might be another person's punishment, participants should identify their own rewards and build them into their action plans.

Assist participants in reviewing their plans, ensuring that their goal is clear and measurable, that concrete action steps are articulated and priorized, that contingencies are in place, that accountability and support are ensured, and that appropriate rewards are built in to facilitate achievement and to support their ongoing career journey.

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